Free GIFT TAG KIT

BUMPER ISSUE, MORE PAGES, MORE CHARTS

Cross Stitcher

December '97

With you every stitch of the way

No.63 £3.99

BUMPER CHRISTMAS SPECIAL!

20 Festive ideas for Christmas cards

PLUS TREE DECORATIONS, PICTURES & QUICK GIFTS GALORE!

THIS MONTH'S FREE Cross Stitcher KIT

ALL YOU NEED to stitch two festive gift tags

PLUS four more matching designs inside!

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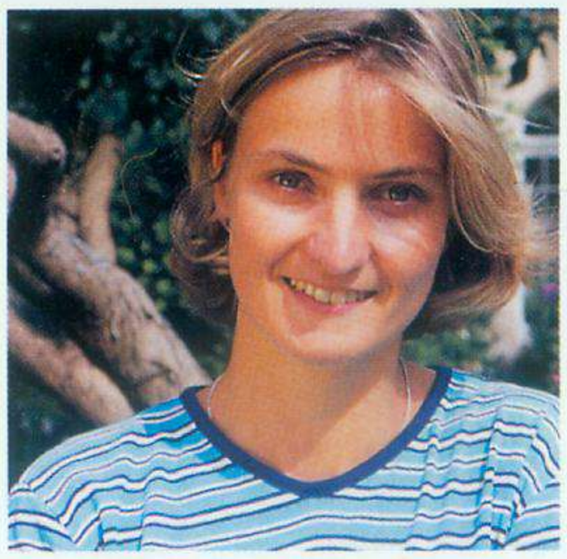
CROSS STITCHER



We're well and truly into the Christmas spirit here at *Cross Stitcher*, and we hope that you'll be feeling festive, too! There's certainly plenty of Christmas stitching to choose from in this issue – but where should you start?

How do you fancy stitching a quick Christmas card to get you in the mood? In our Christmas Card Special starting on page 20 you'll find a wonderful array of cards in a range of styles – from cute characters and woodland animals, to snowy scenes and classic carols.

Perhaps, if you're one of those extremely organised people who has already done the Christmas shopping, you'll want to start with some quick gift tags to make your presents into something really special? You'll find two Christmas teddy gift tag kits as this month's free cover kit, plus there are four more matching designs inside.

Or maybe you're after a bigger project to get your needle into! Why not consider the beautiful rowan berry table linen on page 12, Debra Page's eye-catching owls on page 48, or some stunning Christmas angels on page 58?

Whatever you choose to stitch we hope you'll enjoy it and that you like the new look of your favourite magazine. Our main aim in making some changes to *Cross Stitcher* has been to make it easier to stitch from, while maintaining all the great designs, inspirational stories, technical tips, stitching advice and big prizes we know you love. Do write in to me, or to anyone else on the team, and let us know what you think. Incidentally, you can meet us all – this month and every month – in our newly expanded HelpDesk. With all that Christmas stitching to do, maybe that might be the best place to start!

Catherine

Catherine Potter, Editor

Issue 63 December '97

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This month's fabulous free gift is two Christmas teddy gift tag kits – plus four more charts to match!

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20 Christmas cards
Irresistible cards for Christmas – ranging from cute characters to classic carols, and from festive woodland animals to snowy winter scenes. Happy Christmas to you!

The festive cheer begins on page 20

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Christmassy sampler motifs by Christine Howes

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The fourth in our series of British birds designed by Debra Page – this month it's a classic set of beady-eyed owls

20 All the Christmas cards you can stitch!

Cross Stitcher is the fun and helpful face of the needlecraft world. Each month it offers stitchers a mouthwatering selection of projects from Britain's best designers, backed up by quality instructions everyone can follow. But that's not all: the well-rounded mix of informative reviews, exciting competitions and entertaining features all add up to make *Cross Stitcher* THE stitcher's friend. Above all, this is your magazine and your comments and contributions are always welcomed. *Cross Stitcher* is brought to you by Future Publishing, the home of Britain's best-selling craft magazines. Four other Future craft publications are shown on the right.

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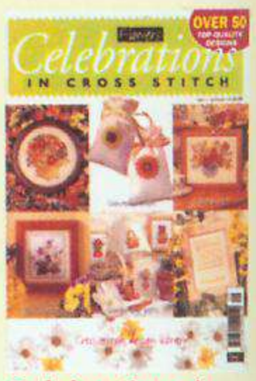

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55 Against the odds
Not only has this stitcher fought back against ME, but she's also come shining through with her own range of cross stitch kits!

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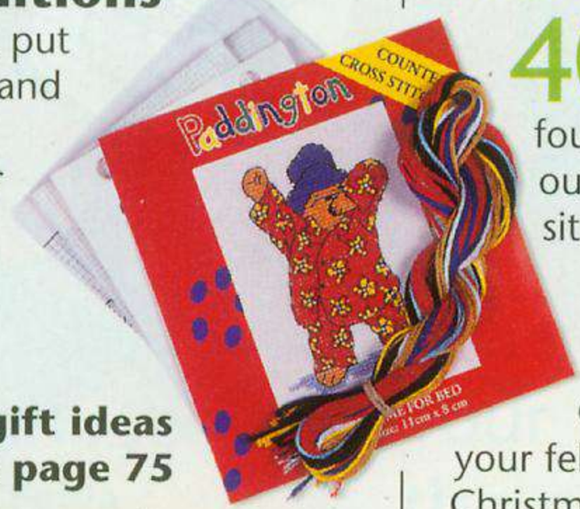

Great gift ideas on page 75

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■ For full details turn to page 89

Cover kit: Santa and Rudolph teddy tags

Cross stitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
321	047	0510	Red
801	357	2007	Dark brown
3820	306	2509	Yellow
3828	373	2103	Light brown

Backstitch in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
310	403	Black	Black *face details*
321	047	0510	Red *Rudolph's nose*
801	357	2007	Dark brown *all other outlines and details*

French knots in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
801	357	2007	Dark brown *Rudolph's bell*

Design details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 16HPI aida

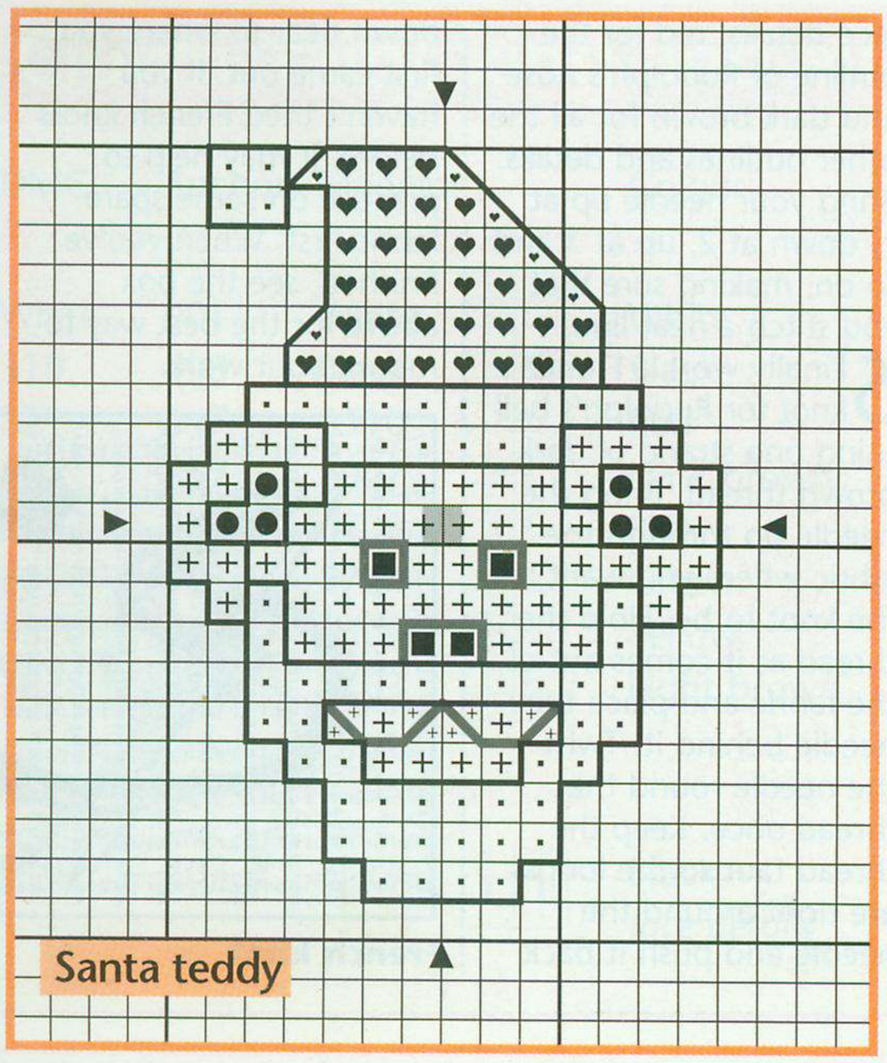
- **Stitch count** 19 high x 16 wide
- **Design area** 3x3cm (1⅛x1in)

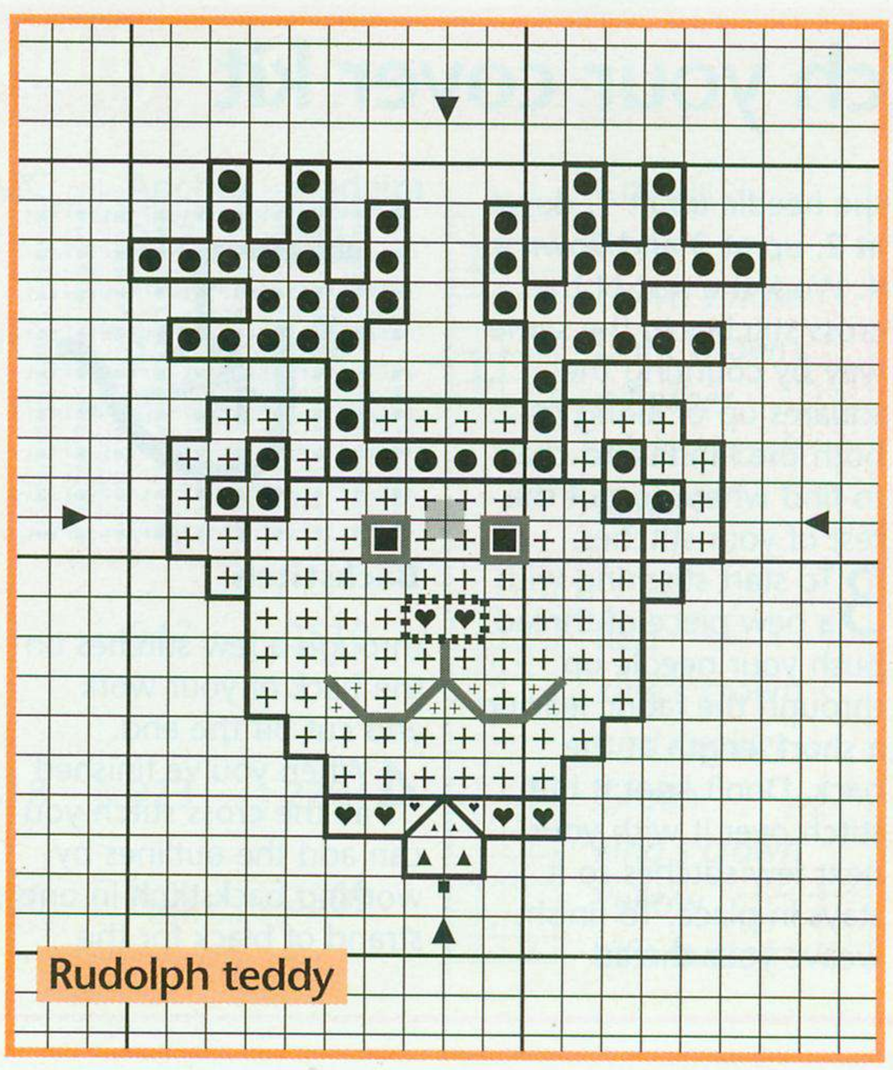
Your FREE kit Christmas gift tags

What's in your kit

- **16HPI aida**
  12x6cm (4¾x2⅜in), cream
- **Stranded cotton**
  as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle**
  size 26
- **Gift tag**
  with a 3.5cm (1½in) diameter circular opening, (to order more tags see page 84)

Your two free gift tag kits are the perfect way to make your Christmas presents really stand out from the crowd. And because they're so quick to stitch, we've given you four more gift tag charts overleaf!


Santa teddy


Rudolph teddy

Christmas gift tags

Designed by Debbie Cripps

Before you start

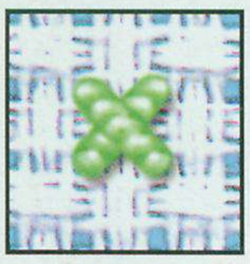
1 Open up your cover kit. You should find a piece of aida fabric, stranded cotton, a tapestry needle and two illustrated gift tags.

2 Have a look at the lengths of stranded cotton – you'll see that there are six strands in each length. In these designs you will work ▶

the cross stitch using two strands of thread, and the backstitch and the French knots are worked with one strand of thread.

3 The fabric in your kit is called aida. It's a fabric which has been woven in blocks with a hole in each corner of each block as you can see from the diagram below. Each cross stitch is worked over one block of the aida fabric.

4 Now look at the chart. It's similar to graph paper with different symbols in the squares. Each symbol stands for one cross stitch. The key tells you which symbols relate to which colours and how many strands of stranded cotton to use.



A single crosss stitch

5 Fold the fabric in half both ways to find the centre because this is where you're going to start stitching. The grey square on the chart shows you where the centre is. Now you're ready to start, so follow the step by step instructions below.

How to mount your Christmas gift tags

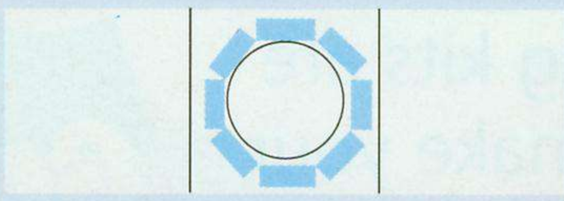
1 Open out one of your gift tags in the kit – you'll see it is in three sections with a round aperture cut out of the middle panel. Lightly mark in pencil which of your outer sections will be stuck to the back of your stitching. This will save having to undo it later!

2 Place small pieces of double-sided tape all the way round the opening on the inside of the card and along the top and bottom of the same section. See pic A below.

3 Turn the card over. Hold it over your stitching so that your design motif fits centrally in the round opening. When you are happy with the position of it, press the card down on to the fabric until it sticks. See pic B below.

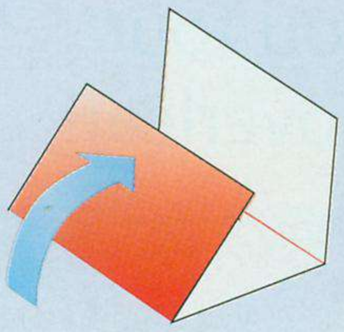
4 Turn the card over and place a piece of wadding the same size as the opening over the back of the completed stitching.

5 Attach double-sided tape around the edges of the card section you marked earlier and press this down onto the stitching until it sticks. See pic C below.



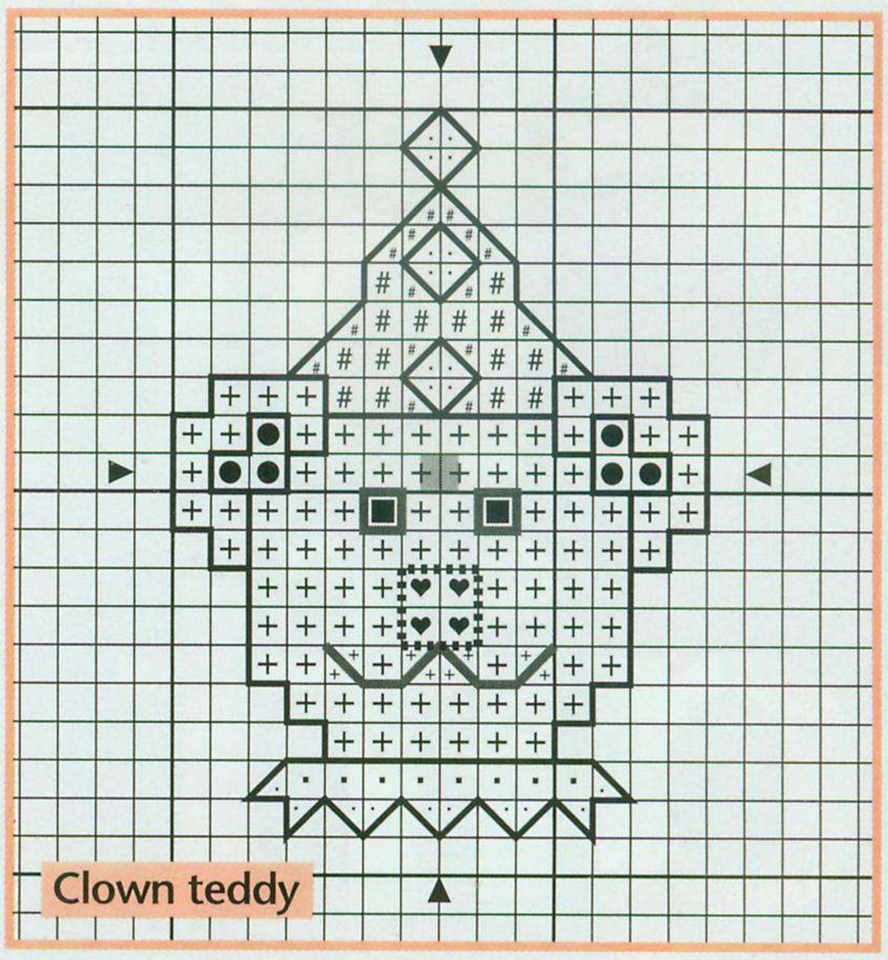
A. Place double sided sticky tape around the opening on the back of the card

B. Turn the card over, position over the stitching and press down

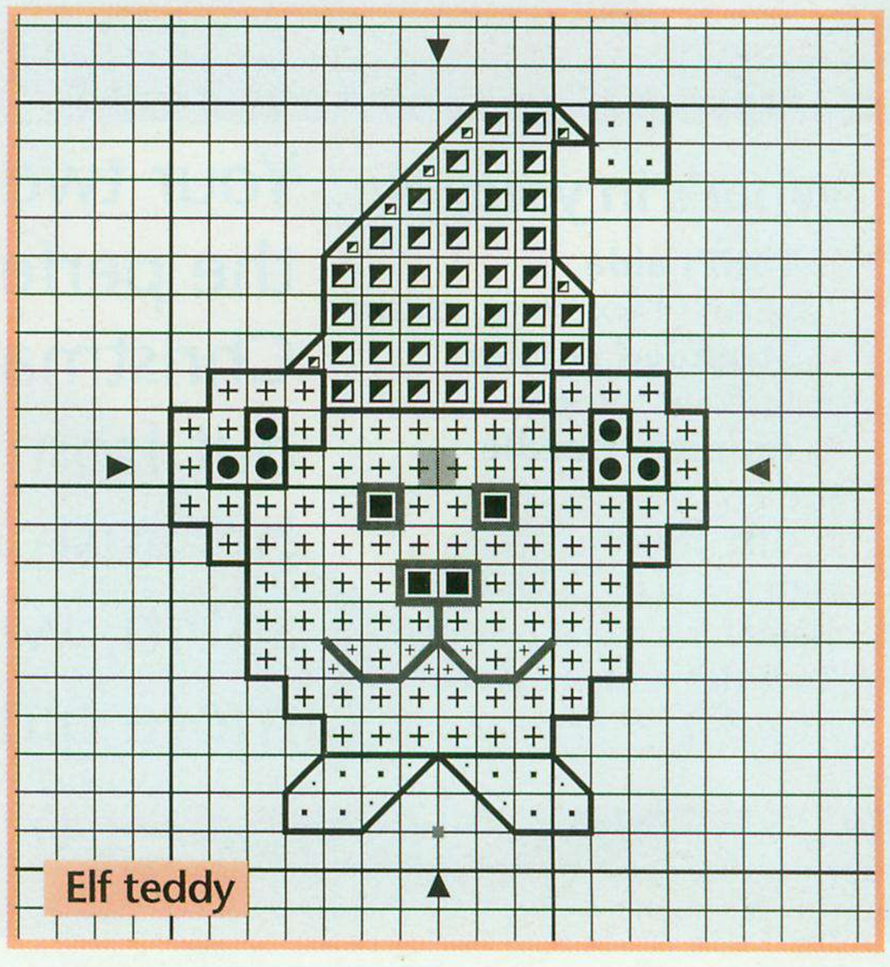


C. Place more double-sided tape around the edges of the flap and press down

PLUS FOUR MORE GREAT



Clown teddy

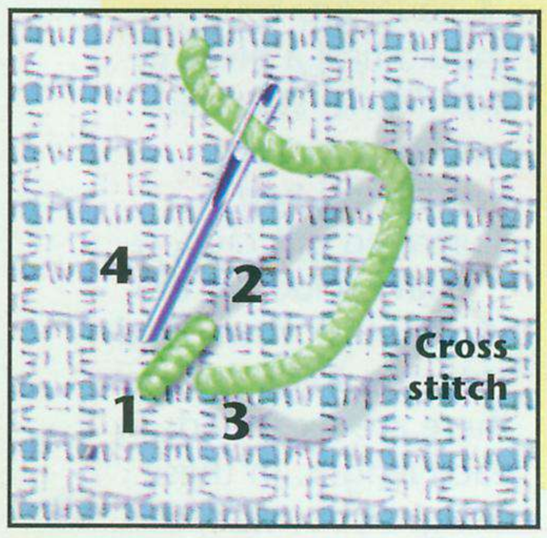


Elf teddy

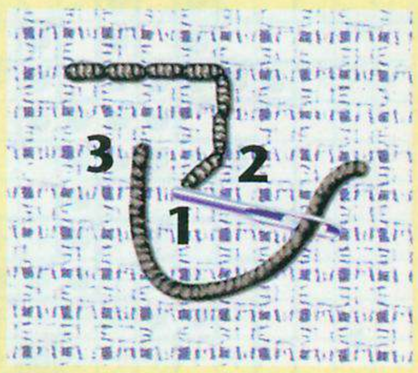
How to stitch your cover kit

1 Pull out two strands of the light brown stranded cotton and thread them both into your needle.

2 Starting in the centre, make your first light brown cross stitch. Bring the needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3 and down at 4. Work the rest of the cross stitches in the same way by counting the squares up or along on both the fabric and chart to find where to put the rest of your stitches.



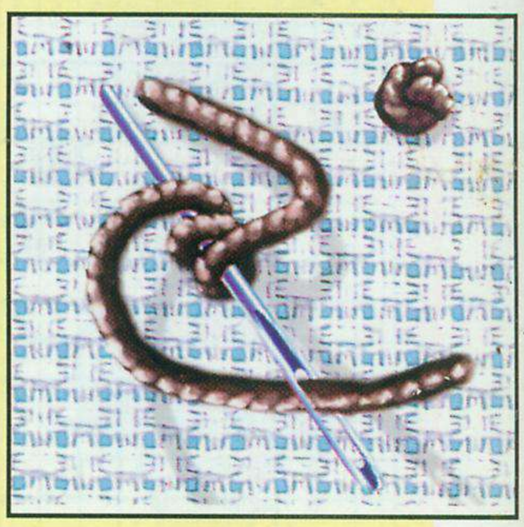
3 To start stitching with a new piece of thread, push your needle up through the fabric leaving a short length at the back. Don't knot it but stitch over it with your next few stitches so it stays in place. To finish, weave your thread through a few stitches on the back of your work and cut off the end.



Backstitch

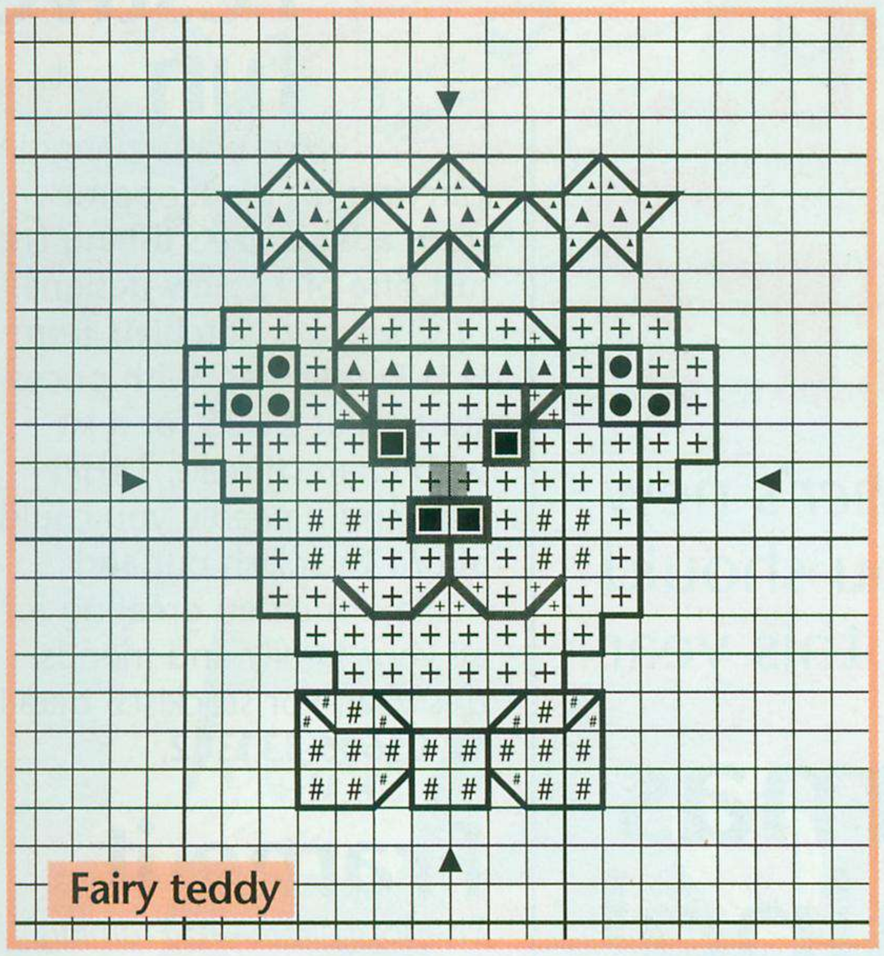
4 When you've finished all the cross stitch you can add the outlines by working backstitch in one strand of black for the face details, red for the outline of Rudolph's nose and dark brown for all the other outlines and details. Bring your needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3 and so on, making sure that you stitch a neat line.

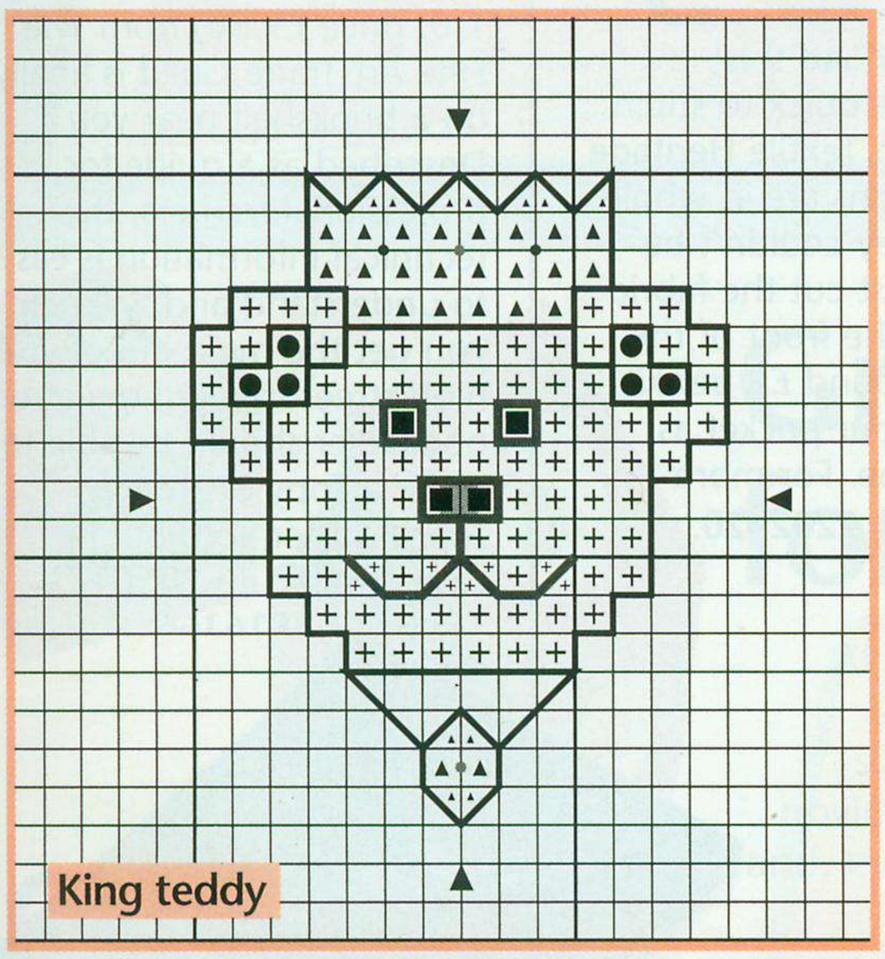
5 Finally work a French knot for Rudolph's bell using one strand of dark brown thread. Bring the needle up through the fabric where you want the knot to be. Hold the thread as it comes out of the fabric and place the needle behind it. Twist the needle round the thread once. Keep the thread taut so the loops are tight around the needle and push it back down near to where you first came out. If you haven't tried French knots before, it may help to practise on some spare fabric first. When you've finished, see the box above for the best way to mount your work.



French knot

TAG DESIGNS TURN TO PAGE 84 FOR MAIL ORDER DETAILS...


Fairy teddy


King teddy

Designed by Debbie Cripps

As these gift tags are so quick to stitch, we couldn't resist giving you four more fun designs to fit inside them. You can order some more of the Merry Christmas gift tags through our mail order service on page 84.

Skill

All the gift tags use whole stitches, backstitch and French knots.

Time to stitch

Allow about two hours to complete each gift tag.

You will need

- **16HPI aida** 12x6cm (4¾x2⅜in), cream
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Gift tag** with a 3.5cm (1½in) diameter circular opening, (to order more card tags see page 84)
- **2oz wadding** 3.5cm (1½in) circle

Clown, fairy, king and elf teddy tags

Cross stitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
321	047	0510	Red
801	357	2007	Dark brown
3607	087	0708	Pink
3818	923	2704	Green
3820	306	2509	Yellow
3828	373	2103	Light brown

Backstitch in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
310	403	Black	Black *face details*
321	047	0510	Red *clown's nose*
801	357	2007	Dark brown *all other outlines and details*

French knots in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
321	047	0510	Red *king's crown and necklet*
3818	923	2704	Green *king's crown*
3820	306	2509	Yellow *elf's button*

Design details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 16HPI aida

- **Stitch count** 19 high x 14 wide
- **Design area** 3x2cm (1⅛x⅞in)

What's new in... December?

Take a few festive ideas from *Cross Stitcher*'s new look news pages before you decide what you should be putting on your Christmas list this year

Festive fun

This cute penguin carrying his dinner home from a hard day's fishing is just one of 12 new designs of Christmas Stitchlets from H H Enterprises. With prices starting at £1.35 for a kit with chart, thread, 14HPI aida and a needle you could afford to splash out and make a stitched greeting for all your family and friends this year. For stockists' details ☎ **01606 331302.**

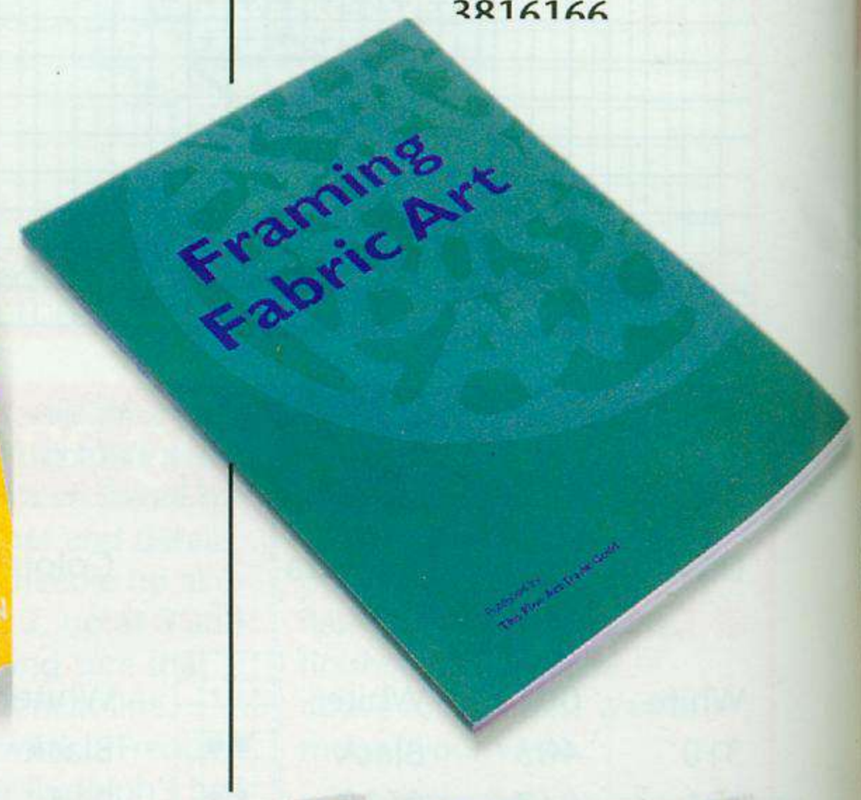
Christmas is coming!

Cut down your workload this Christmas with these quick to stitch miniature cards from Textile Heritage Collection. The designs are in whole stitches only and they couldn't be easier to mount – just cut the fabric to size and stick to the front of the textured card. At around £2 per kit they're as easy on your pocket as they are on your time. For more information ☎ **0131 2202420.**

Gorgeous quick cards to stitch for Christmas

Frame it

The long-awaited *Framing Fabric Art* (ISBN 0-9526294-1-0, price £9.50) from The Fine Art Trade Guild is finally on a bookshelf near you. Described as a guide for professional framers, the technical information is easy to understand and will help you get the most out of your high street framer. Any good bookseller should be able to order a copy of *Framing Fabric Art* for you, but, in case of difficulty ☎ **0171 3816166**



Free for all

There's nothing quite like stitching with pure silk and now you can try it for free! Madeira are offering a free 5m pack of their four stand silk thread to every stitcher who writes in enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Silk Offer, PO Box 6, Thirsk, North Yorkshire YO7 3YX. But hurry, the offer will only be valid while Madeira's stock of 16,000 packs last.
(Offer is strictly limited to one pack per household.)

Book of cards

Each of the designs in *Cross Stitch Greeting Cards* should take you no more than an evening to stitch – just perfect for last minute birthday greetings or quick congratulations cards. Designed by Lynda Burgess and Julia Tidmarsh, each stitch is marked with a coloured cross, making it easy for even absolute beginners to follow. For more experienced stitchers there are 14 pages of extra motifs, borders and alphabets to personalise each card. *Cross Stitch Greeting Cards* is published by Hamlyn, priced £14.95 (ISBN 0-600-59282-0).

A whole book of cross stitch greetings cards

Great gifts for beginners

At only £1 each, these cross stitch kits from Stitch Pics make great stocking fillers. The silhouette designs are the perfect gift for a novice stitcher – they're in whole stitches only and, even better, have no colour changes! For a list of stockists or mail order details ☎ 01273 585247.

Gift wrapping

Why not use your cross stitching skills to make your gifts stand out from the others under the tree this Christmas? New from Impress is this box made of linen-effect card with five circular apertures. Fill it with sweets for the children or fold up a pair of socks inside for dad. At 99p, if you use all your left-over bits of fabric and threads, the flat packed box can work out cheaper than buying your Christmas packaging from the stationery shop. For details of your nearest Impress stockist % 01986 781422.

Snippets

Shopping made simple

■ Glorafilia's mail order Christmas catalogue is bursting with kits and gifts for fellow stitchers. To order your copy send a cheque for £2 to Glorafilia, The Old Mill House, The Ridgeway, Mill Hill Village, London NW7 4EB.

Come join the party

■ Wool and Crafts of Boston is holding a party to which you are all invited. So for extra discounts, freebies, wine and nibbles pop along to 14 Pen Street, Boston, Lincs on 11th November, from 12 – 8pm. ☎ 01205 356681 for details.

Inspirational ideas

■ Out now is the new Autumn/Winter catalogue from Readicut Crafts, featuring loads of new cross stitch kits and accessories. Send £1.75 to Readicut Wool, Terry Mills, Ossett, W Yorks WF5 9SA, or ☎ 01924 810810.

Beautiful Durham

■ The beautiful Durham Cathedral and its famous sanctuary knocker are now available as complete cross stitch kits, priced from £7.95. For details ☎ 01204 300601.

Rule Brittania

■ To cater for patriotic stitchers Meirian Design have produced an *English Sampler* kit, priced £24.00 (plus 60p p&p). To order a kit write to Meiran Design, 8 Fransfield Grove, Sydenham, SE26 6BA. Make cheques out to Ceri Allen.

Exhibition stuff

■ Visit Sulgrave Manor in Banbury, Oxon on Saturday 25th November for a dip into the *Embroiderer's Casket*, an exhibition of historical needlework. ☎ 01295 760205 for further details.

It's easy to win with *Cross Stitcher* – just send us a postcard and one of these fantastic prizes could be yours

Free for you!

Show tickets

20 FREE

For loads of gift ideas visit the Christmas Craft Fair at London's Alexandra Palace on 5 – 7th December. With masses of stands from manufacturers of all sorts of craft materials, you're bound to have a rip-roaring time. It would normally cost you £14 to get in but we've got 10 pairs of tickets to give away, including free entry to the Festive Table Show.

■ Send a postcard to: **Christmas Craft Fair Giveaway (XS63), *Cross Stitcher*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL**

Christmas Carol

10 FREE

Pooh, Tiger and Piglet have come to cheer Eeyore up with a chorus or two of some jolly Christmas carols in this wonderfully Christmassy kit from Designer Stitches.

■ **Send a postcard to: Pooh Giveaway (XS63), *Cross Stitcher*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL.**

Priced approx £12.50, the kit is available from all major needlecraft stockists. For a catalogue featuring loads of exclusive Disney designs send a cheque for £4 to: Designer Stitches, 2/4 Pendlebury Road, Gately Cheshire SK8 4BH, or, for more information, tel: 0161 4910006.

Mistletoe bows

10 FREE

Can't find anywhere to put all those Christmas cards you receive? Then try this – a 3D bow topped off with a metre of petersham ribbon to pin them onto. The kits cost around £9.95 and come with aida, felt, threads, ribbon and instructions.

For details call: Textile Heritage on tel: 0131 220 2420.

■ **Send a postcard to: Mistletoe Giveaway (XS63), Textile Heritage Collection, 5 India Buildings, Victoria Street, Edinburgh EH1 2EX.**

Stylish bookmarks

20 FREE

If you love the clean lines of Charles Rennie MacKintosh's designs then you'll adore stitching these bookmark kits. For details of the rest of the Glasgow Style range contact Timeless Stitches on tel: 01223 262948.

■ **Send a postcard to: Glasgow Style Giveaway (XS63), *Cross Stitcher*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2DL.**

Kits: Herb Cottage

10 FREE

The latest in Readicut Crafts' series of cottage kits is out now, featuring aromatic flowers and favourite herbs. The kit is great for beginners, who can practise on the individual herbs first, before moving on to the central cottage design. Worked on 14HPI white aida the kit is worth £15.99 and we've got 10 to giveaway. Everyone who enters will get a copy of Readicut's new catalogue.

■ **Send a postcard to: Herb Cottage Giveaway (XS63), 28 Goodge Street, London WIP 1FG.**

■ **HOW TO ENTER**
Write your name and address on the back of a postcard or sealed down envelope and send it to the address shown with the giveaway. You may enter as many different giveaways as you wish, but each entry must be on a separate postcard. Your entry must arrive no later than first post on **25th November 1997**. Winners will be notified by post within 28 days.

Festive dining

Stitch this versatile table linen to add festive style to your Christmas dinner, and to brighten up your table throughout the winter months. Designed by Carol Phillipson

Having a special tablecloth for Christmas usually means three things. One – it's absolutely gorgeous; two – you only see it once a year; and three – someone is bound to spill their gravy on it!

This beautiful table linen from Carol Phillipson could well become that special set in your own family, but it seems far too lovely for you to hide it away just for Christmas. The great thing about this set is that it uses rowan berries rather than the more traditional holly, so it's versatile enough to bring out on any special winter occasion.

The tablecloth, coasters, napkins and napkin rings look beautiful when stitched together as a set, but there's also plenty of scope in this project to stitch just one or two items. If you're short for time, why not try stitching the central panel of the tablecloth with napkin rings to match? This will still give a very effective and stylish look to your table in a relatively short time.

The central design takes about 15 hours to stitch, and each of the four corner designs will take six hours. The napkin rings will take about two hours, the coaster about five hours and the napkins about three hours.

If you were to stitch the entire set for six place settings it would take you about 99 hours. That works out to about five weeks if you stitch for about three hours a day, which for a family heirloom is probably about right!

How to wash your table linen

■ If you use a reputable brand of thread (such as DMC, Anchor or Madeira) your stitching should be washable at about 30°C.

■ To be sure that the colours won't run, use a gentle liquid fabric detergent in tepid water and do not rub or twist the stitching.

■ Use plenty of clear, tepid water to rinse.

■ To iron, place your stitched linen face down on a fluffy white towel and press. This will prevent the stitches from becoming squashed as you iron.

• Photography Jonathan Fisher • Styling Catherine Renshaw

Cross Stitcher
TABLE LINEN SET

The finished design

Cross Stitcher Tablecloth: Centre garland

Berries tablecloth

Skill

The only fiddly thing about this design is the blending of two different shades of red thread to give the berries a realistic look.

Time to stitch

The centre garland will take about 15 hours to compete. Allow about six hours to finish each corner motif.

What to do

1 Make up the tablecloth before stitching the design. This ensures that your

You will need

- **32HPI evenweave** 66x66cm (26x26in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Lace** 3.75m (3yds) length x 5cm (2in) wide, white cotton lace
- **Sewing kit** needles, pins, sewing thread, tape measure and scissors

Berries tablecloth and coaster

■ Cross stitch in two strands

Anchor	DMC	Madeira		Colour
001	White	White	· ·	White
266	471	1408	⋈ ⋈	Light green
268	469	1504	● ●	Dark green
334	606	0209	♥ ♥	Red
843	3013	1605	× ×	Olive
903	640	1905	◆ ◆	Light brown
905	3781	2106	■ ■	Dark brown

■ Cross stitch blending one strand of each colour

326	720	0309	# #	Orange
334	606	0209		Red

■ Backstitch in two strands

Anchor	DMC	Madeira		Colour
903	640	1905		Light brown *all backstitch*

■ Repeat positioning

tablecloth centre

■ Design details

Our models were stitched using Anchor threads

Tablecloth
Stitched on 32HPI evenweave over two threads
Corner motif
- **Stitch count** 61 high x 61 wide
- **Design area** 10x10cm (3⅞x3⅞in)

Centre
- **Stitch count** 169 high x 169 wide
- **Design area** 27x27cm (10½x10½in)

Coaster
Stitched on 16HPI aida
- **Stitch count** 57 high x 56 wide
- **Design area** 9x9cm (3½x3½in)

design is centred on the finished cloth.

2 Place the lace right side down on the right side of the fabric 2.5cm (1in) from the edge – ease it carefully around the corners. Join the two ends of the lace by overlapping them approximately 1.5cm (½in), turning the upper edge over so that the right side remains neat.

3 Tack and stitch in place and then trim the fabric close to the lace edge.

4 Fold the fabric in half both ways to find the centre of the tablecloth. Following the chart, stitch your design in the centre first, then work the corner motifs 1.5cm (½in) in from the cotton lace edging.

TIP

Aida fabric can be quite stiff, so to remove any starch, and make it drape more softly, wash it several times prior to stitching

The finished design

Berries coaster

Skill

With only whole stitches and backstitches, but a number of colour changes, this winter coaster will give a quick finish for an intermediate stitcher.

Time to stitch

You can finish and mount this coaster design in just a couple of evenings.

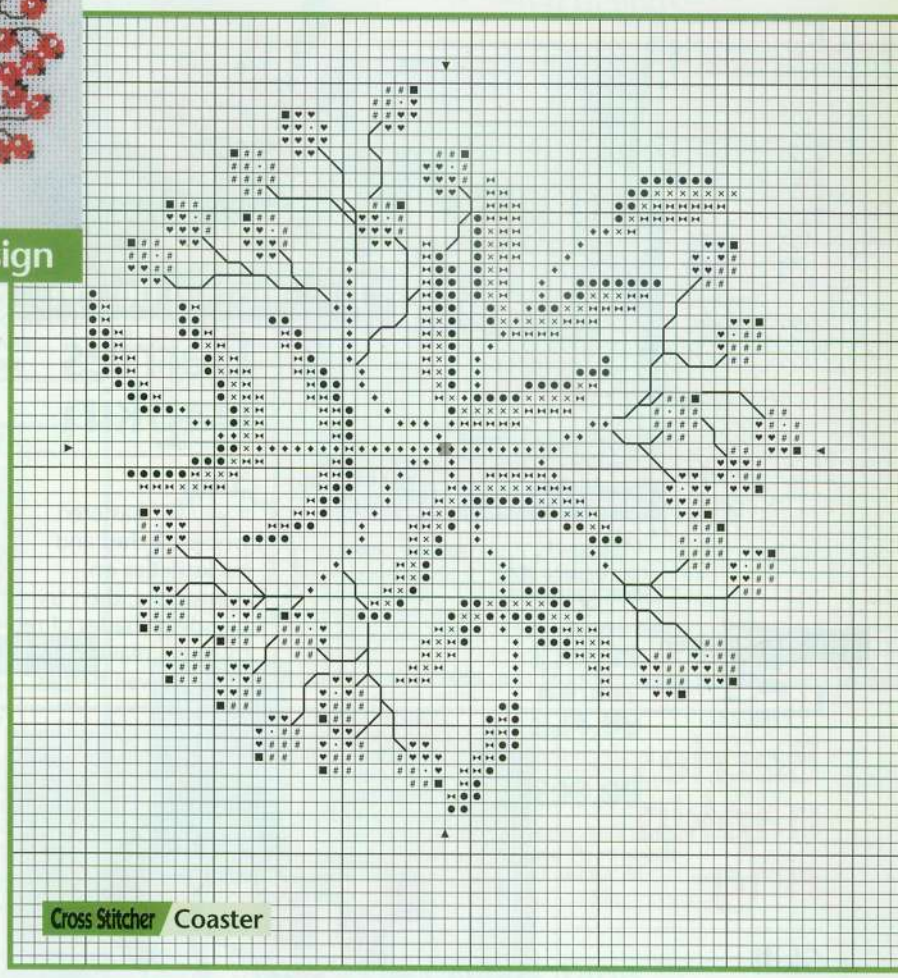
What to do

1 When all the stitching has been completed, you are ready to mount your work in the coaster. To prevent fraying, place iron-on interfacing onto the wrong side of your stitching and press in place.

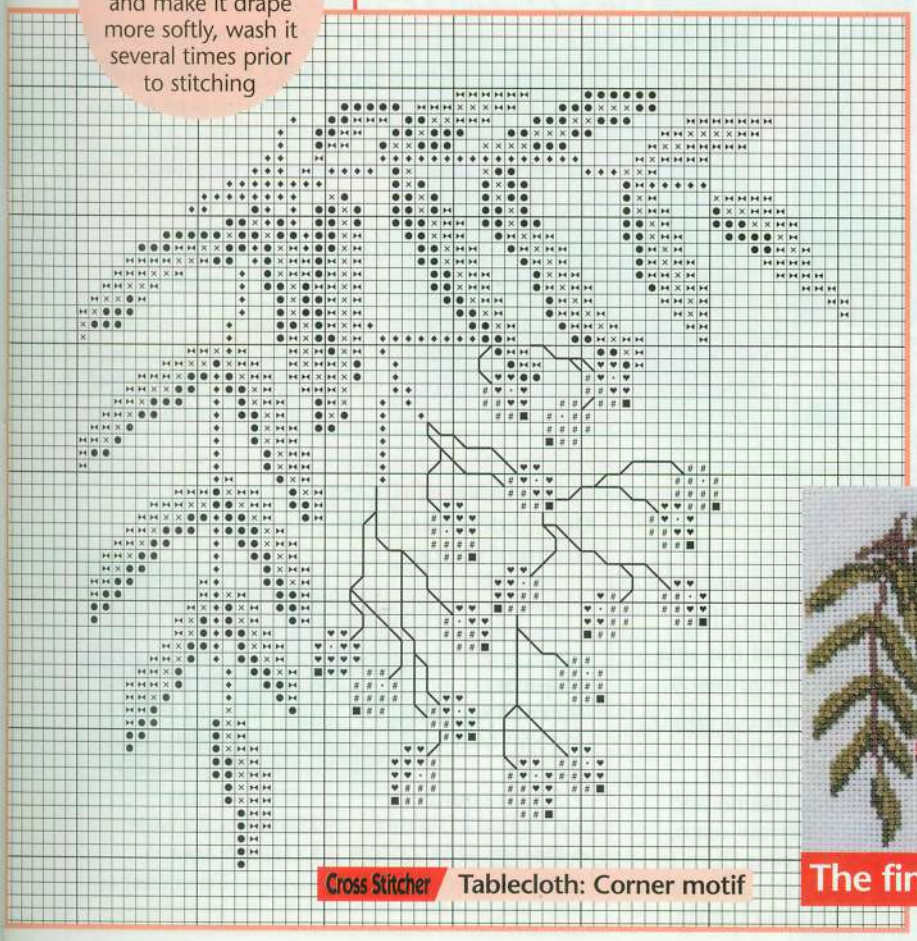
2 Use the backing square from the coaster as a template. Place it over the back of your stitching, making sure that your design is central, and draw around it with a soft pencil.

3 Use sharp scissors to carefully cut along the pencil line.

4 Place your stitched piece face down in the coaster and position the plastic backing square over it. Then press the back of the coaster into position making sure that you don't trap any of the fabric.



Cross Stitcher Coaster

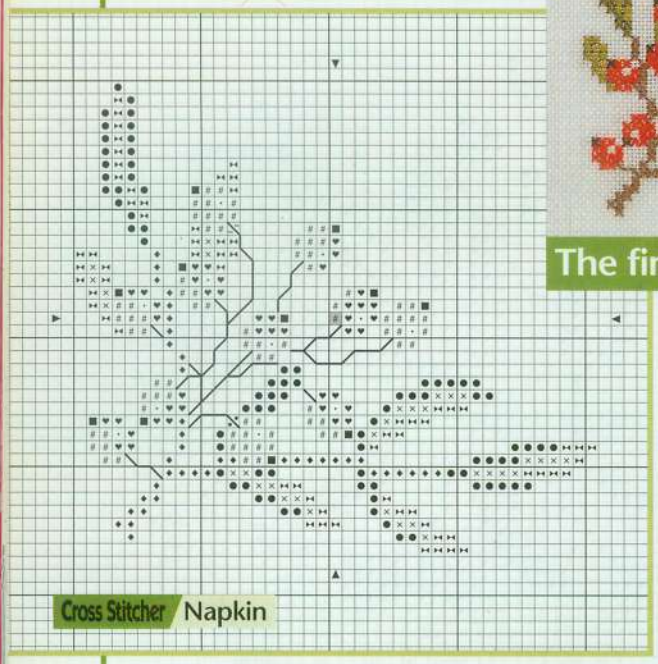


Cross Stitcher Tablecloth: Corner motif

The finished design

You will need

- **16HPI aida** 18x18cm (7x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Coaster** 10x10cm (4x4in) square, (available from Fabric Flair, tel: 01985 846400)
- **Iron-on Interfacing** 18x18cm (7x7in)



The finished design

Berries napkin

Skill

If you've mastered whole stitches and backstitches on evenweave, then try blending shades of red to give a realistic finish to the rowan berries.

You will need

- **28HPI jobelan** 40x40cm (16x16in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Lace** 1.75 metres (2yds) length x 2.5cm (1in) wide, white cotton lace
- **Sewing kit** include needles, pins, sewing thread, tape measure and scissors

Time to stitch

From start to finish it'll take just an evening to make up and stitch.

What to do

1 Make up the lace-edged napkin in the same way as the tablecloth. Make sure the lace follows the warp and weft of the evenweave.

2 Stitch the rowan berry motif in the corner of the napkin approximately 5cm (2in) in from the edge.

TIP

Use cotton lace for decorating table linen rather than nylon lace – cotton lace is heavier and will hang better

Berries napkin ring

Skill

Worked on a 16HPI aida band with no fractional stitches, this design is really simple to stitch.

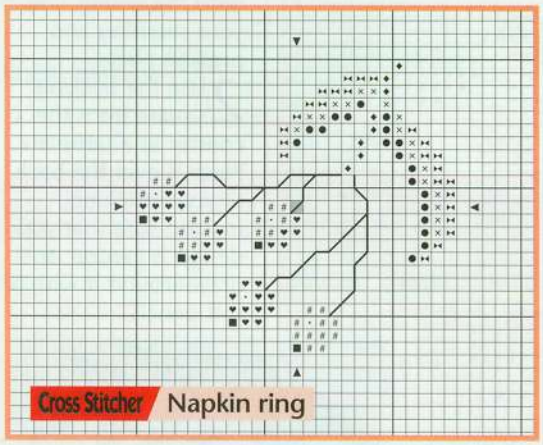
Time to stitch

It'll take just a couple of hours to stitch a rowan berry napkin ring to brighten up a plain white serviette.

You will need

- **16HPI Zweigart aida band** 15cm (6in) length x 5cm (2in) wide, white (tel: 0116 2811 040 for nearest stockist)
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Iron-on interfacing** 15cm (6in) length x 5cm (2in) wide
- **Sewing kit** include needles, pins, sewing thread, tape measure and scissors

The finished design



What to do

1 Fold your aida band in half to find the centre and stitch the rowan berry motif following the chart.

2 When you have finished stitching the motif, iron medium-weight interfacing onto the wrong side of the aida band to strengthen it.

3 Place the cut edges of the band together, with the right sides facing and stitch a narrow seam, to form a ring. Turn to the right side and slip round a plain napkin.

Napkin & Napkin Ring

Anchor	DMC	Madeira		Colour
Cross stitch in two strands				
001	White	White		White
266	471	1408		Light green
268	469	1504		Dark green
334	606	0209		Red
843	3013	1605		Olive
903	640	1905		Light brown
905	3781	2106		Dark brown
Cross stitch blending one strand of each colour				
326	720	0309		Orange
334	606	0209		Red
Backstitch in two strands				
903	640	1905		Light brown *all backstitch*

Design details

Our models were stitched using Anchor stranded cottons

Napkin	Napkin ring
Stitched on 28HPI Jobelan over two threads	Stitched on 16HPI, 2in, white aida band with scalloped edge
• **Stitch count** 37 high x 41 wide.	• **Stitch count** 23 high x 25 wide
• **Design area** 7x7cm (2⅝x3in)	• **Design area** 4x4cm (1½x1½in)

Postbag

We love hearing your news and views so why not write to us here at *Cross Stitcher*?

Write to:
The Editor,
Cross Stitcher
Postbag, 30
Monmouth
Street,
Bath BA1 2BW.
email:
cpotter@futurenet.co.uk

Look what he did!

Thank you so much for the lovely nursery designs and borders in the September issue of *Cross Stitcher* – just in time for the birth of our latest granddaughter, Lena. Whilst Mummy was in hospital I had the pleasure of looking after my grandson, Skye, and teaching him to cross stitch.

Skye with a present for his new baby sister

We were all surprised at his obvious talent for reading patterns with precision and his artistic skills. He completed the bib he is holding in a very short time and is looking forward to his next project. Skye took his fair share of ribbing from his grandfather and brother Nathan, however once they recognised his skills they were all in for having a go.
Donna Montegriffo, Gibraltar

■ **Maybe Skye will teach his new sister to stitch just as soon as she's old enough to hold a needle. Catherine**

A message to stitchers

I would like everyone to know how much I am patronised when I go into a stitch shop. I am 15 years old and when I go into my local shop I get a lot of strange looks from the shop assistants. I have been stitching for six months and every time I go into the shop I'm made to feel very uncomfortable, as if I am not supposed to know what I am talking about. To any other young stitchers that are having the same problem – do not give up, cross stitching is too good a hobby to give up because of ageist shop owners.
Paul Brookfield, email

■ **Let's hope Paul, that since we featured you in Issue 61 you've been getting a better deal from your local shopkeeper. We love the fact that stitching appeals to all sorts of people – young and old, boys and girls – and we hope you like the star letter bouquet too. If not, it could be your mum's lucky day! Catherine**

Star letter

Paul gets a raw deal when he visits his local stitch shop

Storage problems

I buy about six magazines each month and am running out of room in my small home. Does anyone have any storage solutions that leave the magazines easily accessible?
Claire Steele, Bangor

■ **A lady I met at the Autumn Needlecraft Fair suggested cutting the tops off old cereal boxes on a slant – just like the magazine files you can buy at the newsagents – and covering the box in sticky-back-plastic. Does anyone else have a good idea to solve Claire's storage problems? Catherine**

That's the way to do it

This is my little stitching companion, his name is Jiff – as you can see sometimes he's more of a hindrance than a help!
Lynda Edwards, Westcliff-on-Sea

■ **Thanks for giving us a real tweet Lynda. Catherine**

Lynda's budgie, Jiff, likes to stick his beak in everywhere!

Star letters

We get so many wonderful letters in our post bag every day that we thought it was about time we thanked you properly for the time and effort you put into writing to us. So now, every month, we'll be giving away a beautiful bunch of flowers from Interflora to the writer of the star letter. This issue Paul Brookfield will be receiving a Harlequin Basket, worth £17.50.

Interflora

To order flowers by Interflora freecall:
0500 434343 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
All major credit cards accepted

For Winston it's just like looking in a mirror!

Winston's over the moon

For my husband's 40th birthday I wanted to stitch him something special so I sent off to have a picture of our dog Winston charted. Rob had to wait a while for his birthday present though – it took me until July this year to get it finished! He says that it was worth the wait and, as you can see, Winston is happy with it too.
Christine Lake, New York

■ **The cross stitch picture is a great likeness Christine. With all that detail, it's no wonder it took you so long to stitch. Catherine**

Third time lucky

Last year I wrote to you regarding *The Wedding*, a design from Lavender and Lace. My task was to stitch three, even though at the time of writing last year I had only completed two. I got married on 17th August 1996 and gave the mums one of the cross stitch pictures each. I had a third one to do though, for the wedding of our best man who married my bridesmaid on 9th August this year. Well I did it – all the hard work was worth it in the end. I love my hobby and have even got my mum interested in cross stitching. She said it looks hard, but once you get the bug you can't stop. I know just how true that is.

I'm so proud of what I've achieved – and who knows what the future holds? Maybe another one or two of *The Wedding* pictures?
Mrs Janet McAteer, Tunbridge Wells

■ **Thanks for sending us the photo of your bridesmaid's wedding Janet. You must know the pattern for The Wedding off by heart now – you could probably stitch it with your eyes closed. Catherine**

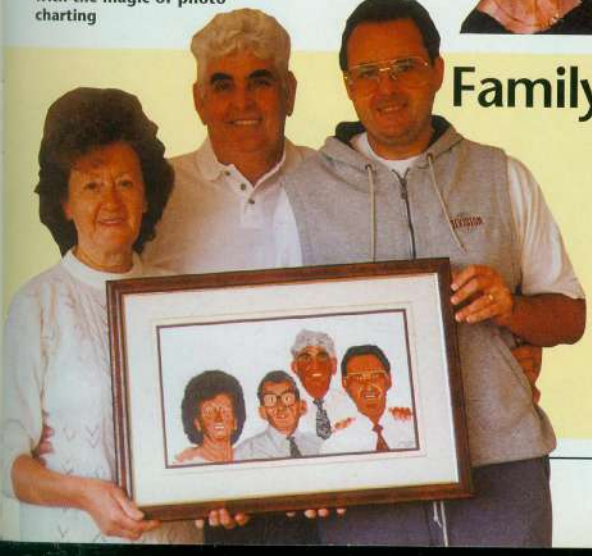
Janet's bridesmaid's wedding, and the sampler she stitched three times!

Mrs Dearden used a nu... *Cross Stitcher's* and Jo Verso's wedding motifs to design this lovely sampler

Wedding belles

This is the sampler I worked for my son and daughter-in-law's wedding day in May. I took some of the motifs from Jo Verso's book *Cards & Keepsakes*, the others were all from previous issues of *Cross Stitcher*, but I designed the layout myself.
Mrs H Dearden, Margate

■ **You've balanced the motifs in your sampler design really well Mrs Dearden. We love the way that you've coordinated the colours in the border with everything else in the design to tie it all together. Catherine**



Jax's family immortalised with the magic of photo charting

Family portrait!

After seeing loads of advertisements for photo charting I decided that a stitched picture of my husband's family would make a lovely Christmas present for my mother-in-law. This was in October 1995, and being new to cross stitch I was unaware of the length of time that it would take to complete the project. It wasn't until August this year that I made the final stitch. My mother-in-law was delighted with the gift – even though she had to wait two years for it. Our only sadness being that granddad passed away before it was finished.
Mrs Jax Leek, Dartford

■ **I'm sure your granddad would have loved the picture. It's a terrific likeness of your family. Catherine**

20 Christm

■ Here's a special Christmas treat from us to you – 17 pages of irresistible cards to start stitching today

nas cards

Cross Stitcher
17 page special

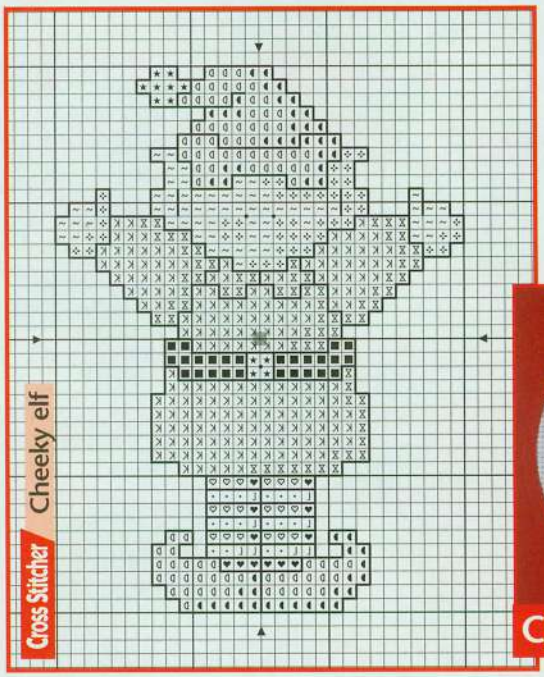
Quick Christm

Everyone is at their busiest at this time of year – just the time when you'd really like to let someone know how special they are by sending them a hand-stitched card! Well, don't panic – Sharon Welch's quick Christmas cuties are the answer to any busy stitcher's prayers.

The cards are simple to stitch and none of them will take you more than an evening to complete. They do use some French knots, but follow our step-by-step instructions on page 88 and you can't go wrong.

What to do

Once you've finished stitching you'll want to mount your work in a card. Find a three-fold card mount that has a suitable aperture and colour to complement the stitched design.



Cheeky elf

Skill

Watch out for the metallic thread!

Time to stitch

Allow just three hours.

1 The card mount will be in three sections with a round opening cut out of the middle panel. Mark in pencil the section that will be stuck to the back of your stitching.

2 Place small pieces of double-sided tape all the way round the opening on the inside of the card and along the edges of the same section.

3 Stick the card to your stitching, ensuring that the motif fits centrally in the opening.

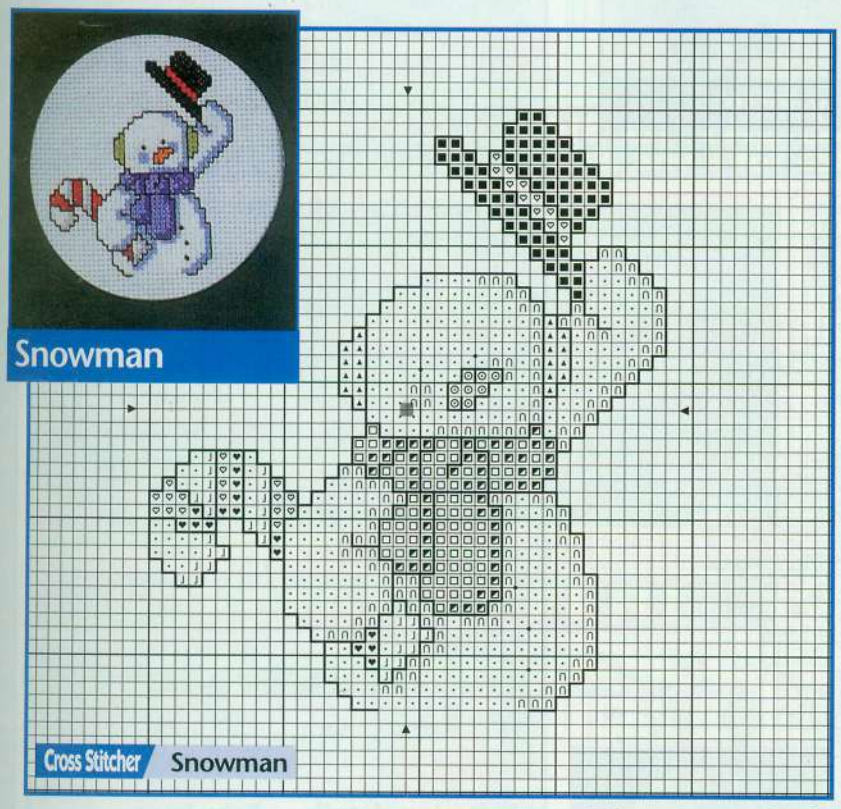
4 Turn the card over and place a piece of wadding the same size as the aperture on the back of the fabric.

5 Stick tape all around the edges of the marked card flap, then press it down until it sticks.

You will need

- **14HPI aida** 16x14.5cm (6¼x5¾in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 24
- **Elf card** with a 9.5cm (3¾in) circular opening, red
- **Snowman card** with a 9.5cm (3¾in) circular opening, red
- **Angel card** with a 7.5x5cm (3x2in) oval opening, green
- **Kitten card** with a 7.8x5.2cm (3x2in) oval opening, red
- **Baby Jesus card** with a 5x7cm (2x2¾in) rectangular opening, red. (All these cards are from Craft Creations, tel: 01992 781900 for stockists' details)
- **2oz wadding** 7.5x5cm (3x2in) oval

as cuties



Snowman

Skill

If French knots make you nervous you could use black seed beads instead – just use a half cross stitch to attach them once you've finished the rest of the design.

Time to stitch

It'll take just four hours to finish this jolly design, which unlike a real snowman won't ever melt away.

Christmas cuties

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
■ Cross stitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
333	119	0804	Dark purple
340	118	0902	Light purple
341	117	0901	Light blue
367	210	1312	Dk grey green
368	214	1310	Lt grey green
414	235	1801	Dark grey
415	398	1802	Medium grey
435	1046	2010	Dark brown
436	1045	2011	Light brown
606	335	0209	Light red
701	227	1305	Dk emerald green
703	238	1307	Lt emerald green
762	234	1804	Light grey
776	024	0607	Med pink
798	131	0905	Dark blue
800	128	1001	Very light blue
809	130	0909	Medium blue
817	9046	0211	Dark red
818	1020	0608	Light pink
894	031	0408	Dk pink
912	205	1213	Dk mint green
954	204	1212	Med mint green
955	206	1210	Lt mint green
970	316	0204	Dark orange
DMC Metallic embroidery floss			Gold
■ Cross stitch blending one strand of each colour			
727	293	0110	Light yellow
742	303	2513	Light orange
■ Backstitch in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *all other outlines and details*
■ Long stitch in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *whiskers*
DMC Metallic embroidery floss			Gold *halo*
■ French knots in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *eyes and buttons*

■ Design details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 14HPI white aida

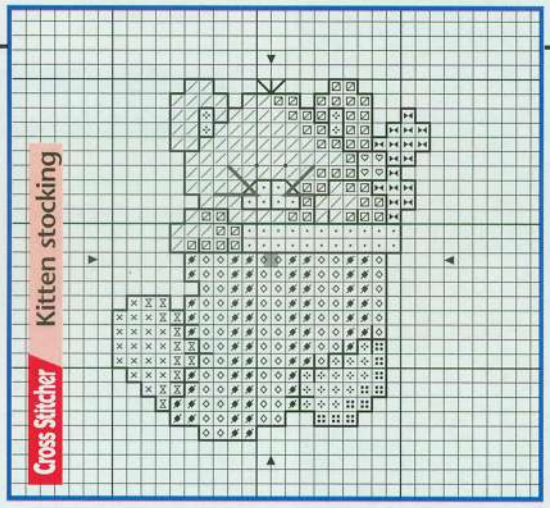
Cheeky elf

- **Stitch count** 40 high x 30 wide
- **Design area** 7x5cm (2⅞x2⅛in)

Snowman

- **Stitch count** 54 high x 38 wide
- **Design area** 10x7cm (3⅞x2¾in)

Kitten stocking



Kitten stocking

Skill

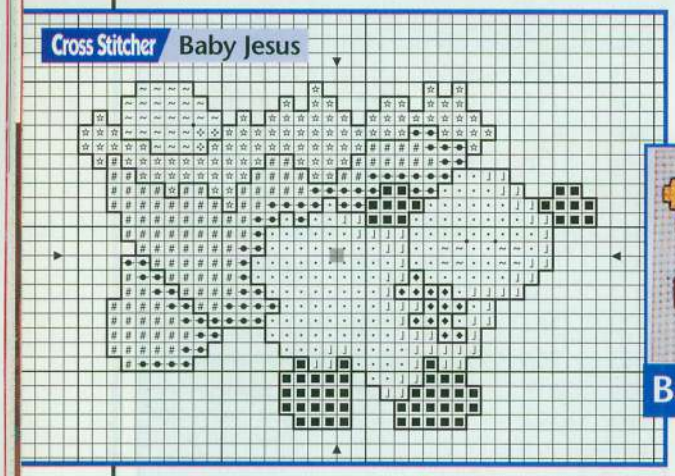
This tiny design uses clever shading to make it look more complicated than it is.

Time to stitch

Allow two to three hours of leisurely stitching to finish this loveable kitten.

TIP

For full details of all the materials you'll need to finish these cute Christmas cards turn to the previous page



Baby Jesus

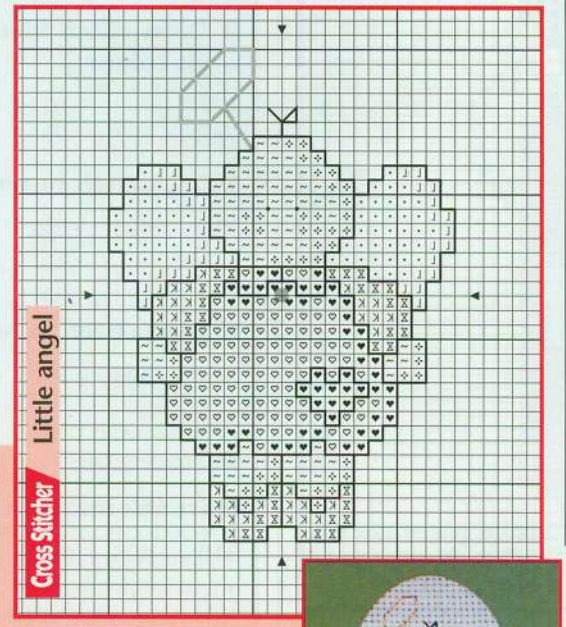
Baby Jesus

Skill

Encourage your kids to stitch this easy-to-stitch design – it'll act as a reminder of the true meaning of Christmas.

Time to stitch

Even a novice stitcher could finish this card in an evening.



Little angel

Skill

Just the thing if you are a bit nervous of metallic threads – this young cherub's halo is a simple backstitched line of gold thread.

Time to stitch

It'll take no more than three hours to stitch and mount this Christmas card.

Little angel

Christmas cuties

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
333	119	0804	Dark purple
340	118	0902	Light purple
341	117	0901	Light blue
367	210	1312	Dk grey green
368	214	1310	Lt grey green
414	235	1801	Dark grey
415	398	1802	Medium grey
435	1046	2010	Dark brown
436	1045	2011	Light brown
606	335	0209	Light red
701	227	1305	Dk emerald green
703	238	1307	Lt emerald green
762	234	1804	Light grey
776	024	0607	Med pink
798	131	0905	Dark blue
800	128	1001	Very light blue
809	130	0909	Medium blue
817	9046	0211	Dark red
818	1020	0608	Light pink
894	031	0408	Dk pink
912	205	1213	Dk mint green
954	204	1212	Med mint green
955	206	1210	Lt mint green
970	316	0204	Dark orange
DMC Metallic embroidery floss			Gold
Cross stitch blending one strand of each colour			
727	293	0110	Light yellow
742	303	2513	Light orange
Backstitch in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *all other outlines and details*
Long stitch in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *whiskers*
DMC Metallic embroidery floss			Gold *halo*
French knots in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *eyes and buttons*

Design details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 14HPI white aida

Kitten stocking
- **Stitch count** 25 high x 22 wide
- **Design area** 4x4cm (1¾x1½in)

Baby Jesus
- **Stitch count** 24 high x 36 wide
- **Design area** 4x6cm (1¾x2½in)

Angel
- **Stitch count** 34 high x 24 wide
- **Design area** 6x4cm (2⅜x1¾in)

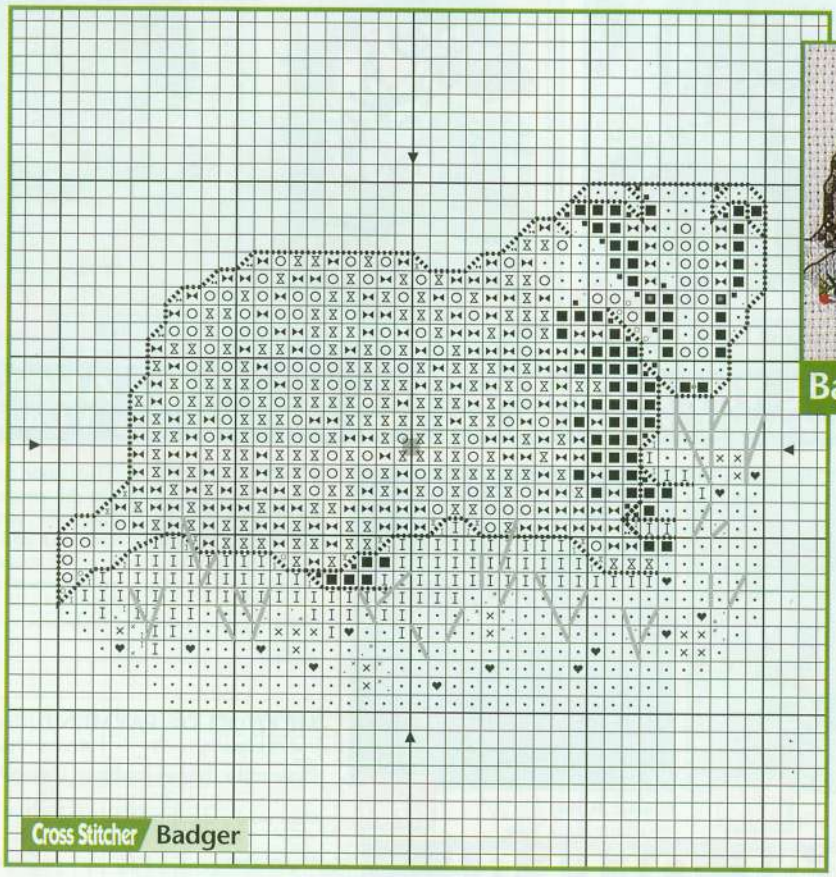
Woodland wo

You can't beat a long walk through the woods on a winter day, with the snow crunching under your feet. And if you're lucky enough to catch a glimpse of some woodland creatures on the way it can turn into a really magical experience.

Denise Roberts has been inspired by her own walks in the countryside to capture five woodland creatures in cross stitch. These classic cards, all of which are finely detailed, will look lovely on any mantelpiece.

All of the designs will make great Christmas cards, but don't worry if you don't get around to stitching them all in time. You could still send these in icy January and February to wish someone well, or to cheer them up on a dreary day.

Each card will take you four or five hours to stitch, so you could have one finished in a spare afternoon. The designs do use some three-quarter stitches and French knots, so if you haven't tried these before, refer to our guidelines on page 88, and practise on some spare aida first. The designs also use a few long stitches which are exactly as they sound – just like one half of a cross stitch but longer – so don't let them put you off!



Badger

Snowy badger

Skill

This badger design uses a few three-quarter stitches, backstitch, three French knots and some long stitches. You will find full instructions in our stitching guidelines on page 88.

Time to stitch

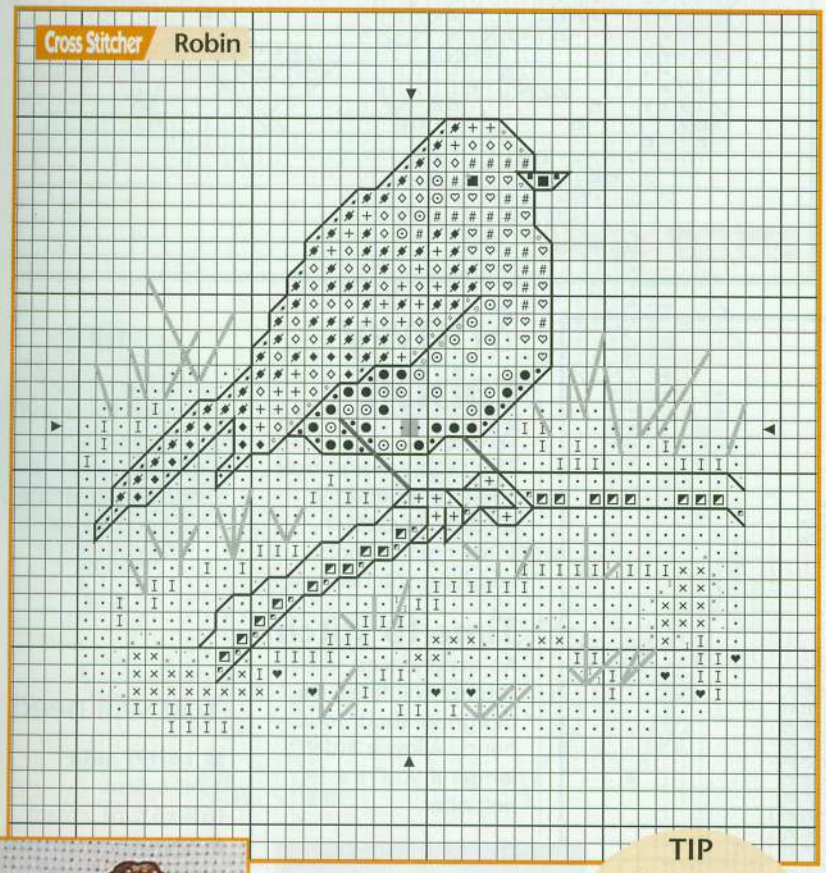
An intermediate stitcher will finish this card in about five hours. Allow a little longer if you need to practise any unfamiliar stitches first on a spare piece of aida.

You will need

For each card:

- **14HPI aida** 16x17cm (6x6¾in), cream
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 24
- **Badger card** 7.5cm (3in) square opening, red (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422 for details of local stockists)
- **Robin card** 7.5cm (3in) square opening, bright green (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422 for details of local stockists)
- **2oz wadding** 7.5cm (3in) square

nderland



Robin

Snowy robin

Skill

If you're looking for a challenge, try stitching this little robin redbreast. The cheery greetings card is well worth the effort when finished.

TIP

Always start stitching from the centre of the design. This point is marked as a grey square in the centre of each chart

Time to stitch

If you start stitching straight after lunch you'll have this design finished by teatime.

Woodland animals

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White
300	352	2304	Dark brick
310	403	Black	Black
321	047	0510	Dark red
400	351	2305	Lt brick
402	1047	2307	Lt terracotta
414	235	1801	Dark grey
415	398	1802	Med grey
444	297	0105	Yellow
606	335	0209	Lt red
642	392	1903	Lt grey green
647	1040	1812	Llght slate
738	366	2013	Dark cream
739	276	2014	Light cream
740	316	0204	Orange
754	4146	2605	Pink
801	358	2007	Light brown
841	378	1911	Fawn
844	1041	1810	Dark slate
905	258	1412	Light green
928	274	2504	Pale blue
938	381	2005	Med brown
3021	905	1904	Dk grey green
3072	847	1709	Light grey
3371	382	2004	Dark brown
3776	1048	2306	Dk terracotta
3790	903	1905	Med grey green
Backstitch in two strands			
3371	382	2004	Dark brown *outline*
Backstitch in one strand			
844	1041	1810	Dark slate *outline*
3371	382	2004	Dark brown *outline*
Long stitch in two strands			
986	246	1406	Dark green *grass*
Long stitch in one strand			
415	398	1802	Medium grey *whiskers*
French knots in one strand			
White	001	White	White *eyes*
3371	382	2004	Dark brown *eyes*

Design Details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 14HPI aida

- **Stitch count** max 40 high x 40 wide
- **Design area** Approx 7x7cm (2⅞x2⅞in)

What to do

Once you've finished stitching you'll want to mount your work in a card. Find a three-fold card mount that has a suitable aperture and colour to complement the design.

1 The card mount will be in three sections with a round opening cut out of the middle panel. Lightly mark in pencil which of your outer sections will be stuck to the back of your stitching. This saves sticking the wrong part and having to undo it later.

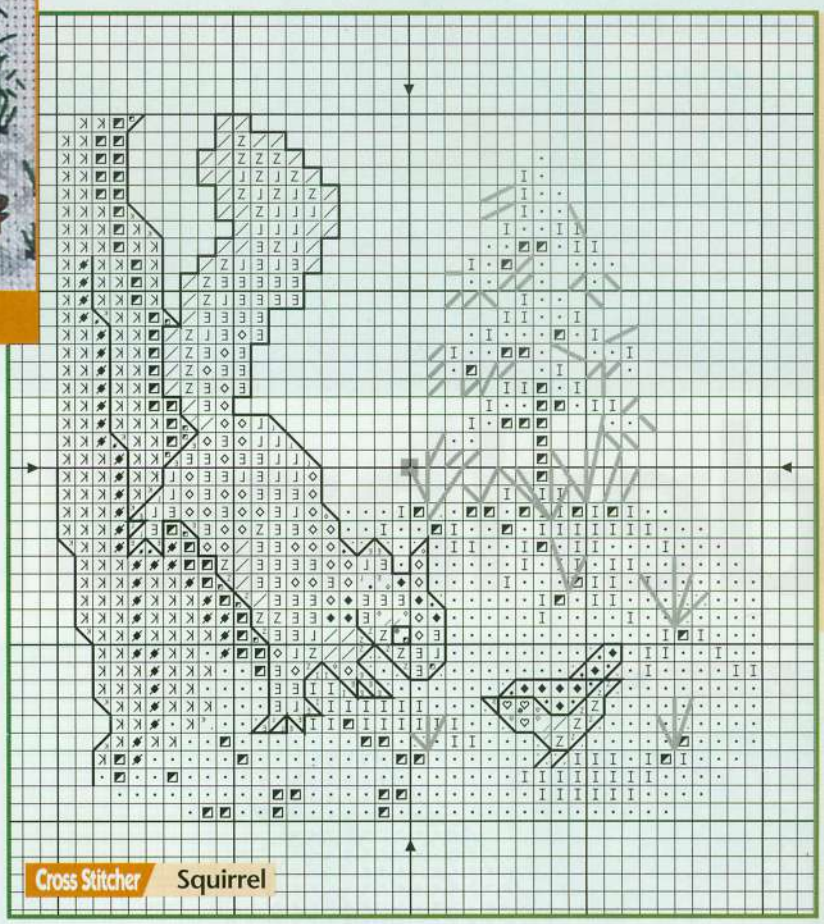
2 Place small pieces of double-sided tape all the way round the opening on the inside of the card and along the top and bottom edges of the same section.

3 Turn the card over. Hold it over your stitching so that your design motif fits centrally in the round opening. When you are happy with the position of it, press the card down onto the fabric until it sticks.

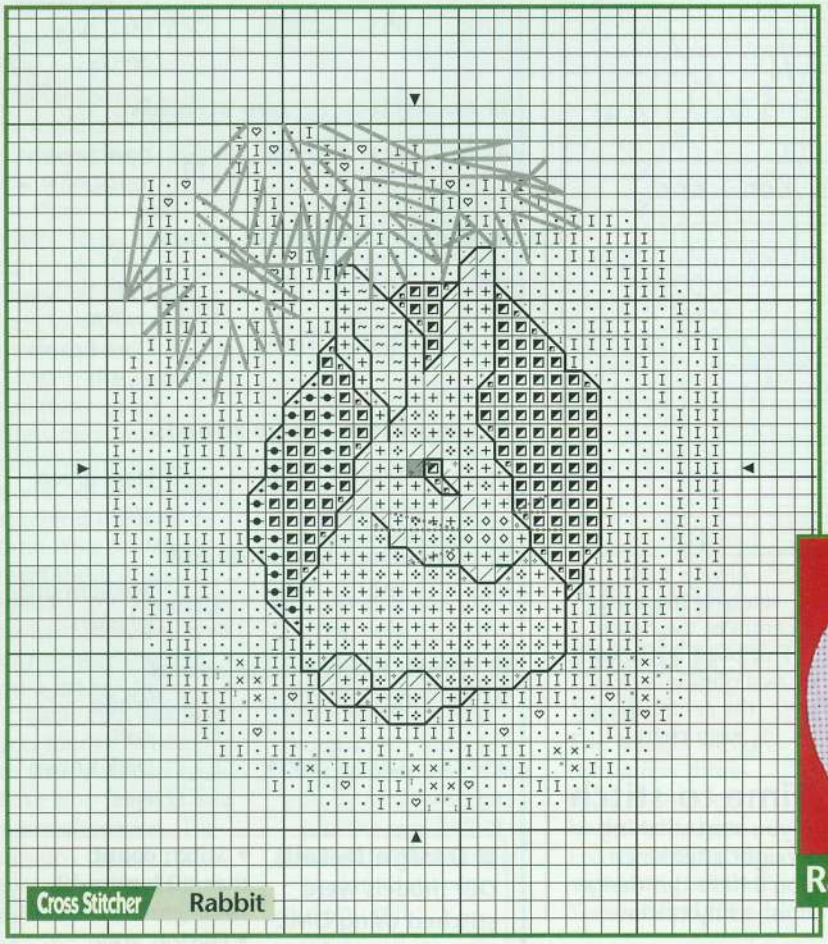
4 Turn the card over and place a piece of 2oz wadding the same size as the aperture over the back of the completed stitching.

5 Stick double-sided tape around the edges of the card flap you marked earlier, then press this down until it sticks.

Squirrel



Cross Stitcher Squirrel



Cross Stitcher Rabbit

Snowy rabbit

Skill

This rabbit design uses a few three-quarter stitches, backstitch, some French knots and long stitches.

Time to stitch

An experienced stitcher will finish this design in about four hours. Allow a little longer if you're a beginner.

Rabbit

TIP

For advice on French knots and three-quarter stitches, turn to our stitching guidelines on page 88

You will need

- **14HPI aida** 17x16.5cm (6¾x6½in), cream
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 24
- **Card** with a 8cm (3in) diameter opening, red (Sewing Basket, tel: 01704 549754 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 8cm (3in) diameter circle

You will need

- **14HPI aida** 17.5x17cm (7x6¾in), cream
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 24
- **Card** with a 7.5cm (3in) square opening, red (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 7.5cm (3in) square

Snowy squirrel

Skill

You'll need to be confident with three-quarter stitches and French knots to speed your way through this cheeky design.

Time to stitch

Allow about four or five hours to complete it, or a bit longer if you're a beginner.

Snowy fox

Skill

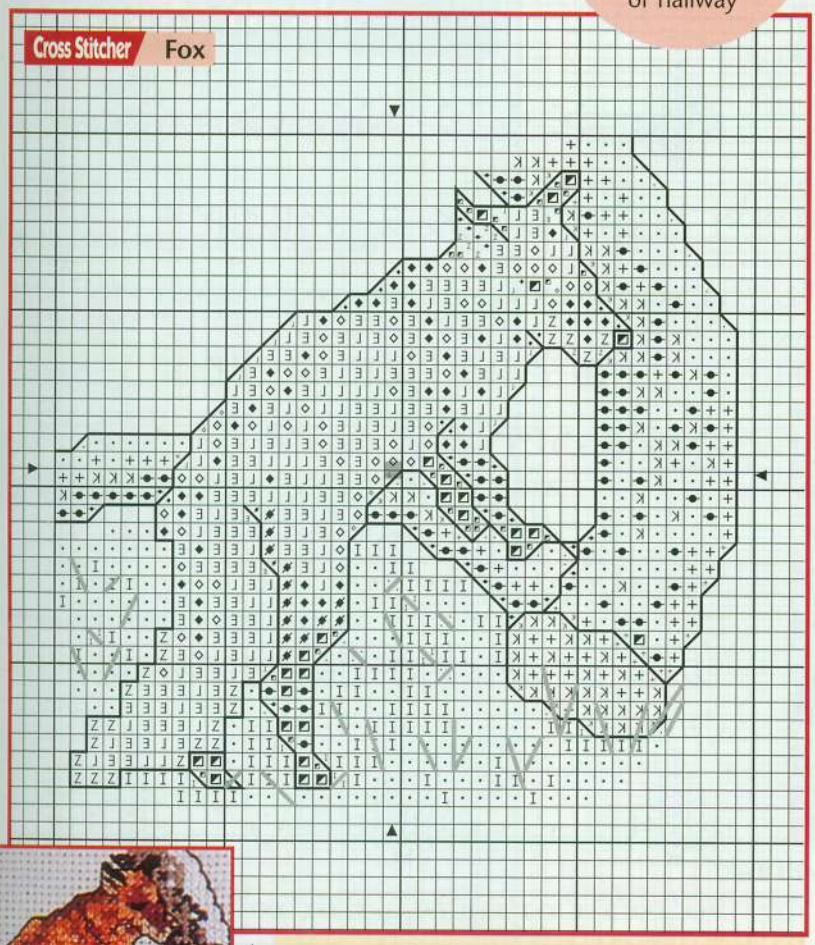
Some experience of three-quarter stitches will help you when stitching this design.

Time to stitch

Allow about four or five hours to stitch and mount this card.

TIP

These woodland animals would also make a lovely set of pictures to hang in a lounge or hallway



You will need

- **14HPI aida** 17x16.5cm (6¾x6½in), cream
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 24
- **Card** with a 8cm (3in) square opening, green (Sewing Basket, tel: 01704 549754 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 8cm (3in) square

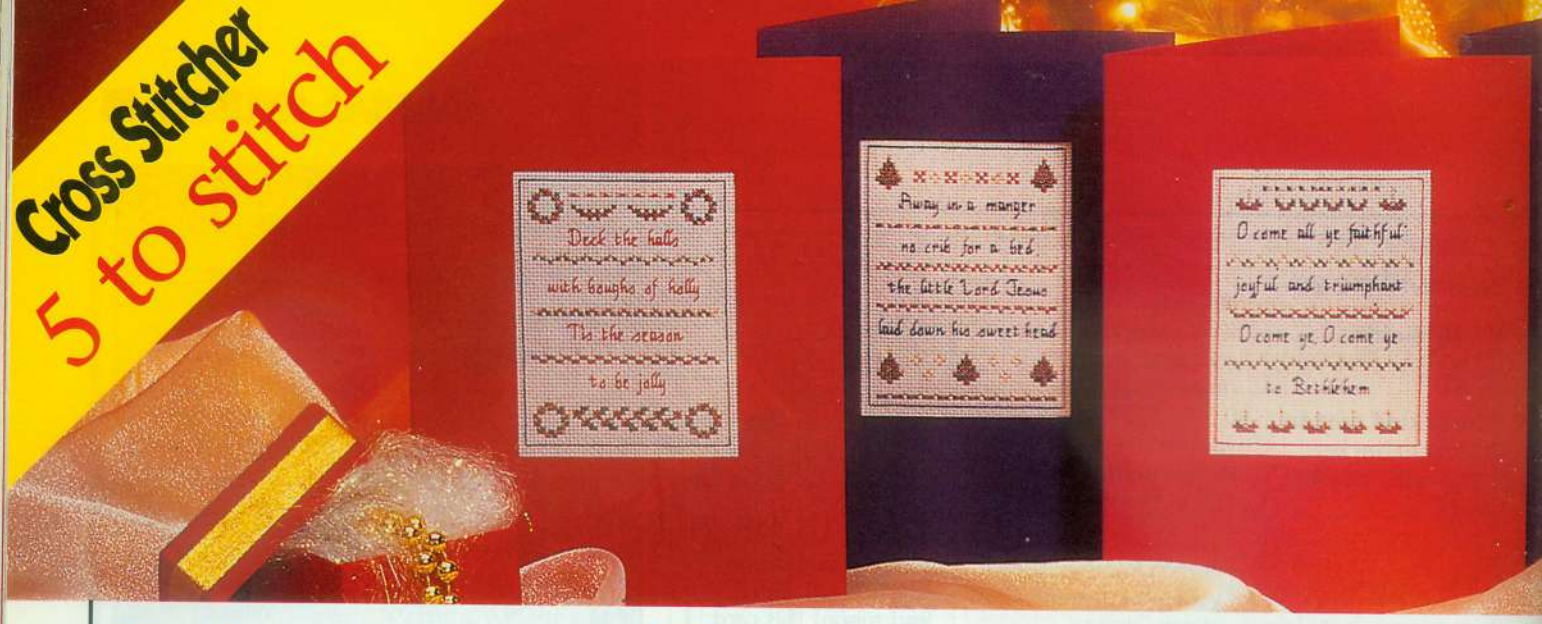
Woodland animals

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White
300	352	2304	Dark brick
310	403	Black	Black
321	047	0510	Dark red
400	351	2305	Lt brick
402	1047	2307	Lt terracotta
414	235	1801	Dark grey
415	398	1802	Med grey
444	297	0105	Yellow
606	335	0209	Lt red
642	392	1903	Lt grey green
647	1040	1812	Llght slate
738	366	2013	Dark cream
739	276	2014	Light cream
740	316	0204	Orange
754	4146	2605	Pink
801	358	2007	Light brown
841	378	1911	Fawn
844	1041	1810	Dark slate
905	258	1412	Light green
928	274	2504	Pale blue
938	381	2005	Med brown
3021	905	1904	Dk grey green
3072	847	1709	Light grey
3371	382	2004	Dark brown
3776	1048	2306	Dk terracotta
3790	903	1905	Med grey green
Backstitch in two strands			
3371	382	2004	Dark brown *outline*
Backstitch in one strand			
844	1041	1810	Dark slate *outline*
3371	382	2004	Dark brown *outline*
Long stitch in two strands			
986	246	1406	Dark green *grass*
Long stitch in one strand			
415	398	1802	Medium grey *whiskers*
French knots in one strand			
White	001	White	White *eyes*
3371	382	2004	Dark brown *eyes*

Design Details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 14HPI aida

- **Stitch count** max 40 high x 40 wide
- **Design area** approx 7x7cm (2⅞x2⅞in)



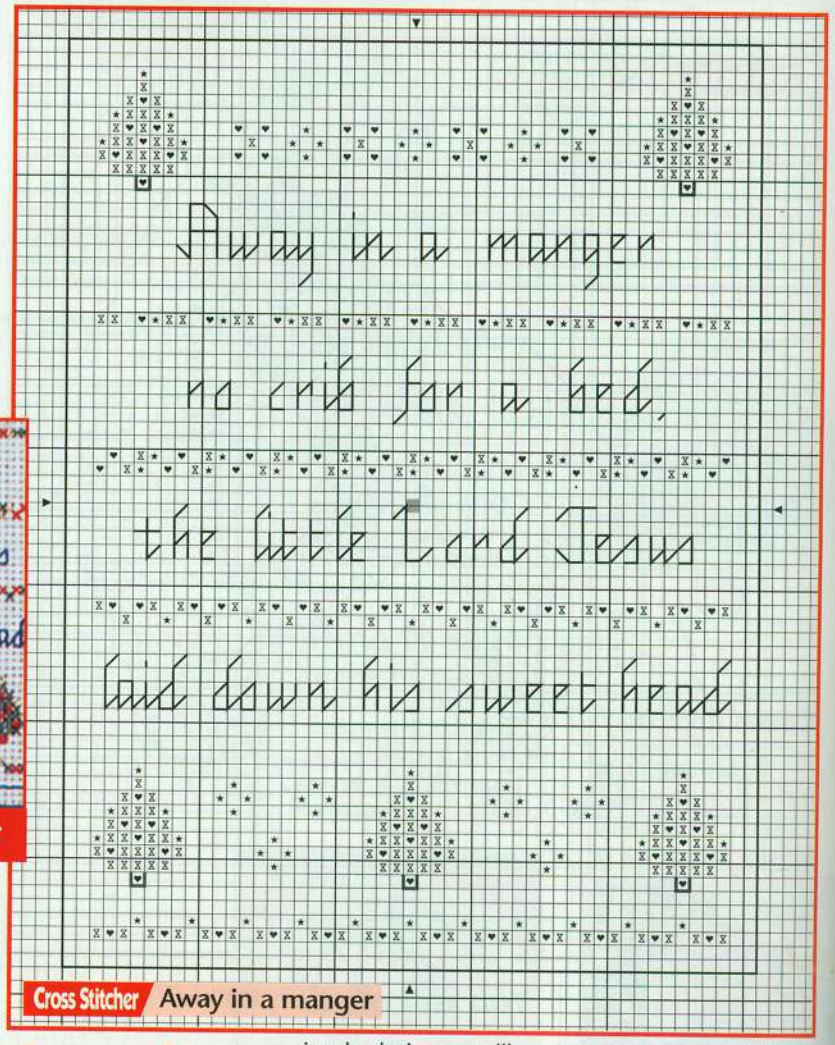
Your favourite

We all know at least one Christmas carol off by heart, even if we don't know any other hymn. Their simple tunes and soft melodies seem to be everywhere at this time of year. They're played when you're put on hold on the telephone, piped into shopping arcades and supermarkets and there's always someone at work who, in the last week before Christmas, brings in their copy of Frank Sinatra singing his favourite festive tunes.

Cathy Bussi has based these designs around five of our favourite carols: Away in a Manger, Ding Dong Merrily on High, O Come All Ye Faithful, Deck the Halls and the ever popular Silent Night. Each carol card is simple to work, with only whole stitches and simple backstitch text, and should take you no longer than six hours to complete.

All the designs use some metallic threads, so remember to keep your thread lengths shorter than normal to prevent tangling.

Away in a manger



Cross Stitcher Away in a manger

You will need

- **18HPI aida** 20x17cm (8x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament No 002, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangular opening, blue (Craft Creations, tel: 01992 781900 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangle

Away in a manger...

Skill

Although this is a simple design, you'll find it easier if you have some stitching experience. It uses a lot of colour changes and metallic threads, so patience is needed.

Time to stitch

If you stitch for two or three hours each night you'll have this card finished in a weekend. Allow a little longer if you're a beginner.

You will need

- **18HPI aida** 20x17cm (8x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament No 002, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangular opening, red (Craft Creations, tel: 01992 781900 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangle

carols

Favourite carols

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands			
Kreinik blending filament No. 002			Gold
Cross stitch in one strand			
304	047	0511	Red
312	979	1005	Dark blue
334	977	1012	Med blue
501	878	1704	Dark green
503	875	1702	Light green
800	128	1001	Light blue
Backstitch in two strands			
Kreinik blending filament No. 002			Gold *stars*
Backstitch in one strand			
304	047	0511	Red *christmas tree pots, lettering and border*
312	979	1005	Dark blue *lettering and border*
501	878	1704	Dark green *holly stems and border*

Design Details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 18HPI aida

- **Stitch count**
Approx size of each card 67 high x 51 wide
- **Design area**
Approx 10x7cm (3¾x2¾in)

Cross Stitcher Deck the halls

Deck the halls...

Skill

This design involves a lot of starting and stopping – make sure you're confident with the best way to do this before you begin. See page 88 if you're not sure.

Time to stitch

Allow yourself about six hours of peace and quiet to complete this lovely design.

Deck the halls

What to do

Once you've finished stitching you'll want to mount your work in a card. Find a three-fold card mount with a suitable aperture and colour for the design.

1 The card mount will be in three sections with a round opening cut out of the middle panel. Lightly mark in pencil which of your outer sections will be stuck to the back of your stitching. This saves sticking the wrong part and having to undo it later.

2 Place small pieces of double-sided tape all the way round the opening on the inside of the card and along the top and bottom edges of the same section.

3 Turn the card over. Hold it over your stitching so that your design motif is central. When you're happy with the position of it, press the card down until it sticks.

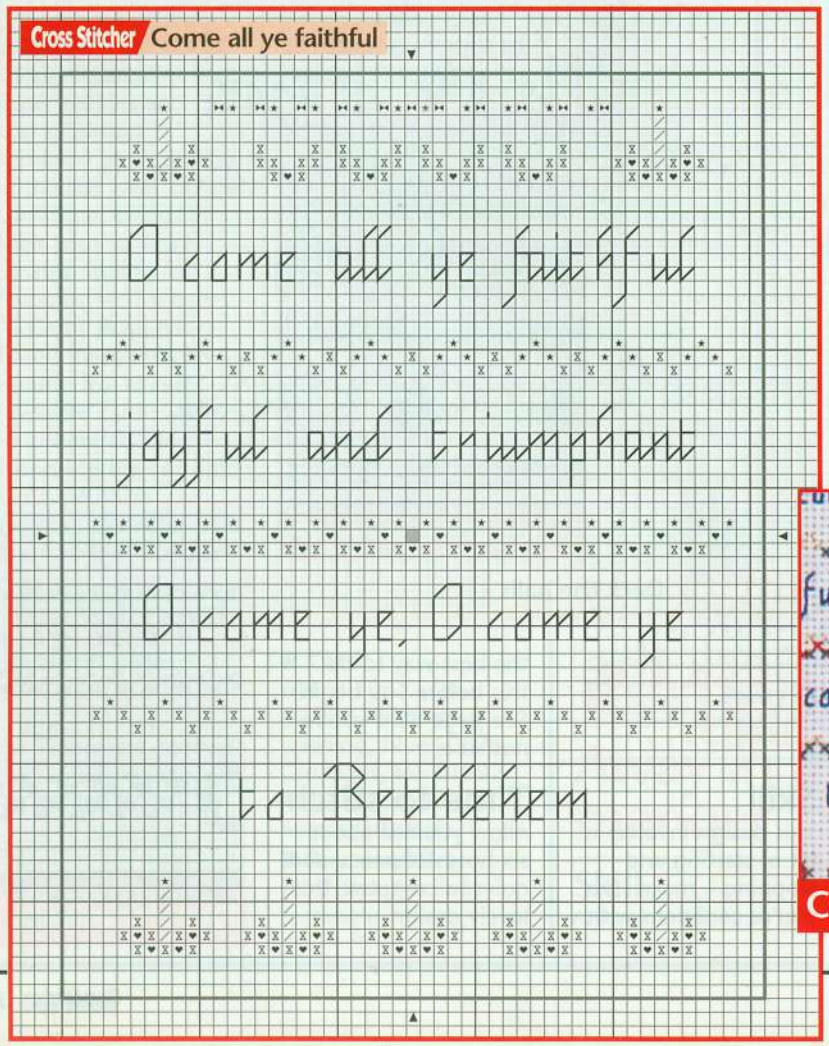
4 Turn the card over and place a piece of 2oz wadding the same size as the aperture over the back of the stitching.

5 Stick double-sided tape around the edges of the card flap you marked earlier, then press this down until it sticks.

Ding dong...

Cross Stitcher Ding dong...

Cross Stitcher Come all ye faithful



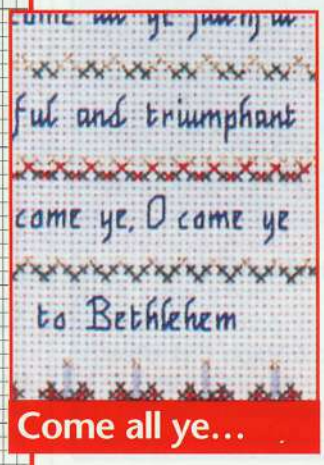
Come all ye faithful

Skill

All the stopping and starting makes this card best for stitchers with some experience.

Time to stitch

Allow about six hours to stitch this pretty mini sampler.



Come all ye...

TIP

When using a metallic thread, knot it onto your needle to prevent it from slipping as you stitch

You will need

- **18HPI aida** 20x17cm (8x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament No 002, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangular opening, red (Craft Creations, tel: 01992 781900 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangle

Ding dong

Skill

The metallic threads and colour changes might make this design an unwise choice for a novice.

Time to stitch

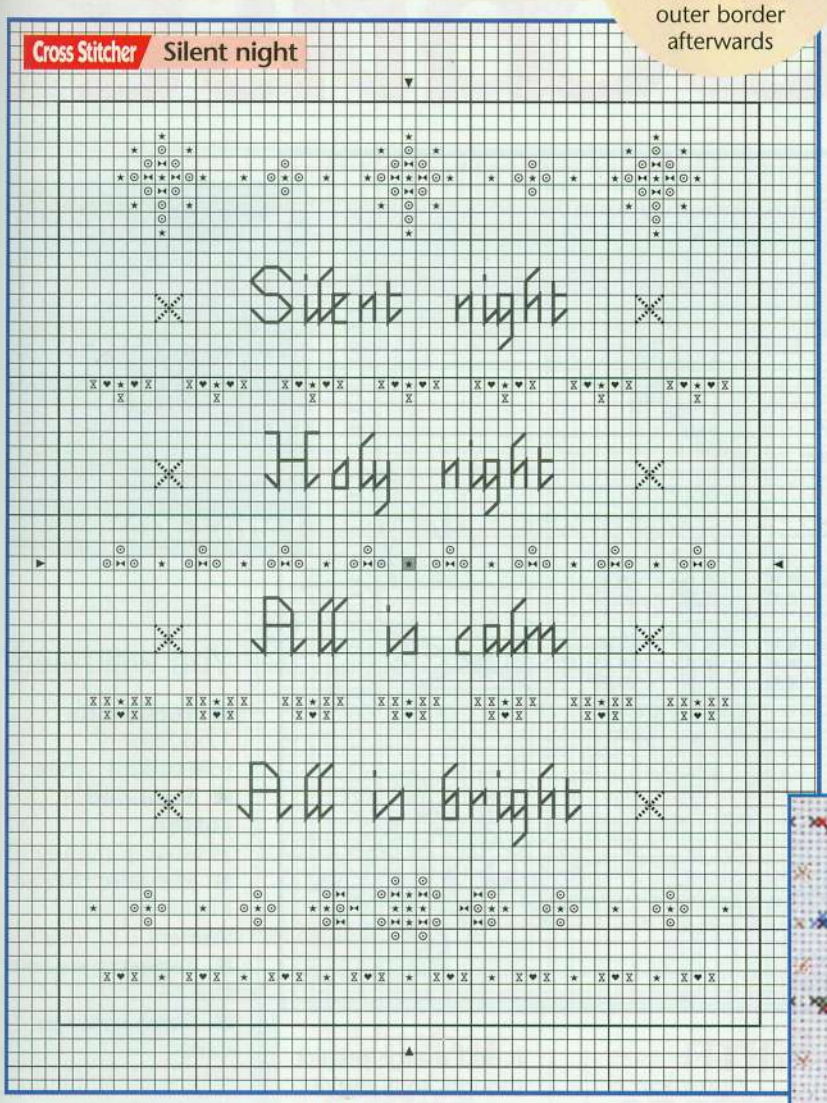
Allow two nights to finish each carol if you stitch for two or three hours each evening.

You will need

- **18HPI aida** 20x17cm (8x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament No 002, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangular opening, red (Craft Creations, tel: 01992 781900 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangle

TIP

You'll find it is easier to stitch all the motifs first and fill in the backstitch words and the outer border afterwards



Favourite carols

DMC	Anchor	Madeira		Colour
Cross stitch in two strands				
Kreinik blending filament No. 002				Gold
Cross stitch in one strand				
304	047	0511		Red
312	979	1005		Dark blue
334	977	1012		Med blue
501	878	1704		Dark green
503	875	1702		Light green
800	128	1001		Light blue
Backstitch in two strands				
Kreinik blending filament No. 002				Gold *stars*
Backstitch in one strand				
304	047	0511		Red *Christmas tree pots, lettering and border*
312	979	1005		Dark blue *lettering and border*
501	878	1704		Dark green *holly stems and borders*

Design Details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 18HPI aida

- **Stitch count**

Approx size of each card 67 high x 51 wide

- **Design area**

Approx 10x7cm (3¾x2¾in)

TIP

Don't drag your threads across the back of the work – they will show through as dark lines at the front

Silent night

Skill

You'll find this design easy if you are a reasonably skilled stitcher. The designs have a lot of colour changes and use metallic thread.

Time to stitch

Allow yourself about six hours to complete this card.

Silent night

You will need

- **18HPI aida** 20x17cm (8x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament No 002, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangular opening, blue (Craft Creations, tel: 01992 781900 for stockists)
- **2oz wadding** 10x7.5cm (4x3in) rectangle

Classic Christm

Suitable for Christmas or winter birthday greetings, Elaine Cosier's snowy scenes of idyllic country dwellings twinkle with a fresh frost.

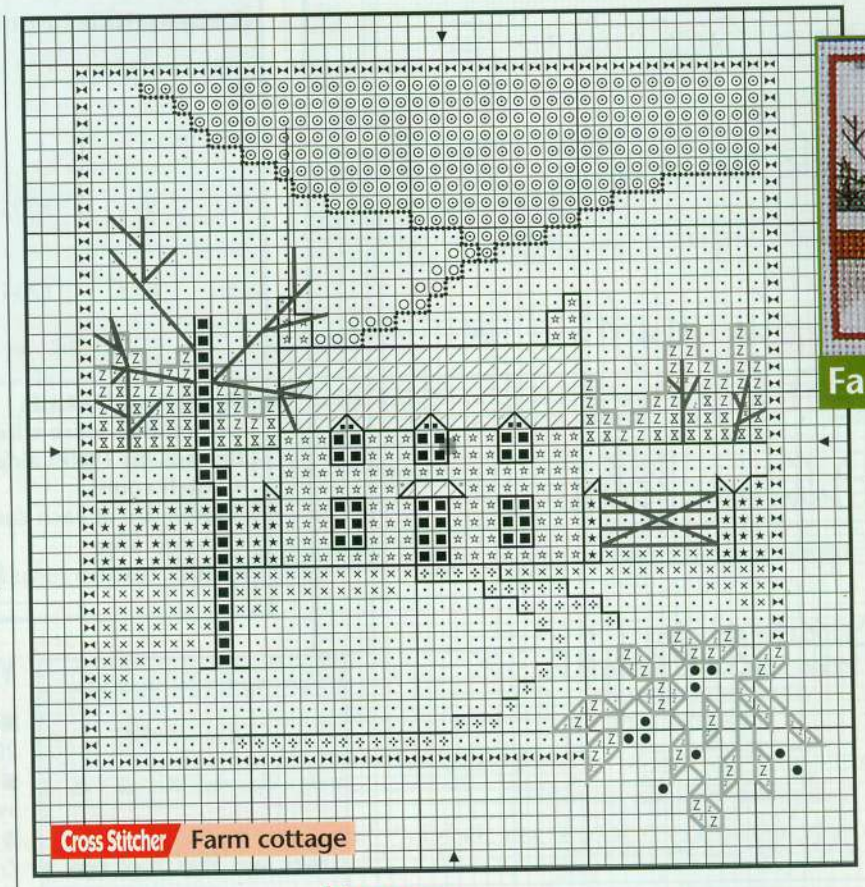
The subtle sparkle is achieved by blending one strand of neutral coloured metallic thread with one of stranded cotton and stitching as normal.

Metallic threads aren't as fiddly to work with as you would think – especially when they're blended with another type of thread.

To make your life easier though, we do recommend that you use a shorter length of thread than you would normally stitch with. This helps prevent the threads from tangling and knotting.

The designs are finished off with a spiky sprig of holly, and the French knot berries give a three-dimensional feel to the finished card. Turn to page 88 for our guidelines if you need a little help with your knots – but if you really can't bear the thought of those fiddly little stitches you can sew on a few red seed beads instead.

Each card should take you less than a week to finish if you set aside a couple of hours each evening. So after you've put the kids to bed, sit down with your stitching and dream of the perfect winter retreat.



Farm cottage

Farm cottage

Skill

This pretty farm cottage uses some three-quarter stitches and French knots, so it is best suited to experienced stitchers. It isn't a large project though, so if you're an adventurous beginner don't be afraid to give it a try.

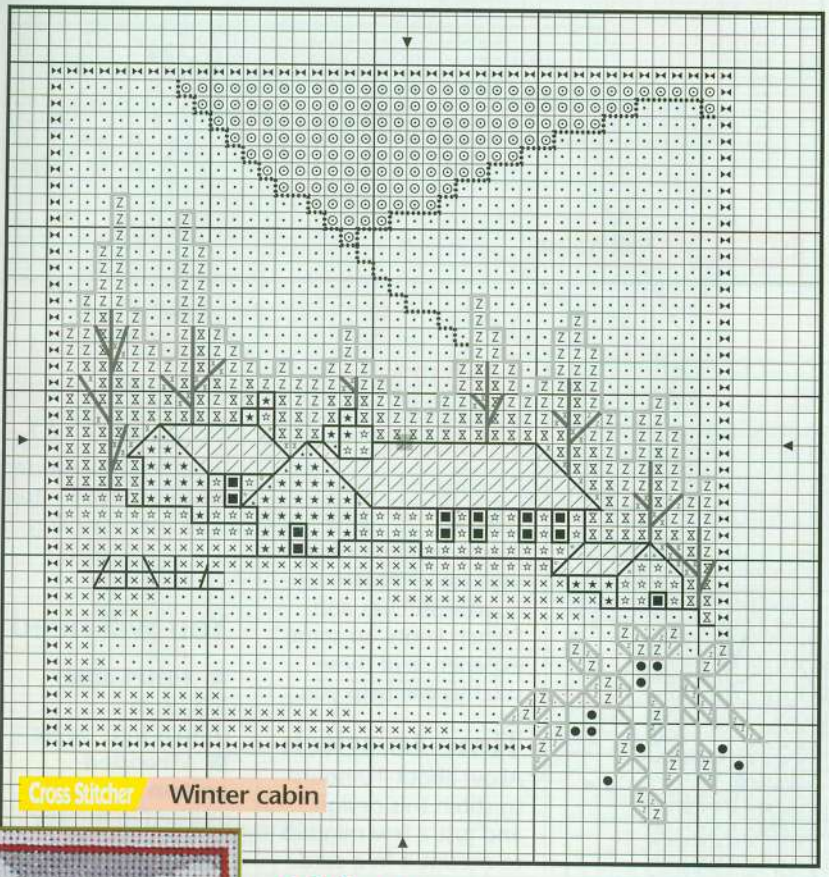
Time to stitch

Allow about 10 hours to stitch this card – or a bit longer if you need to practise any unfamiliar stitches.

You will need

- **16HPI aida** 17x17cm (6¾x6¾in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament 032, pearl
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Farm cottage card** with a 7.5cm (3in) square opening, green
- **Winter cabin card** with a 7.5cm (3in) square opening, red (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422
- **2oz wadding** 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in)

as scenes



Winter cabin

Winter cabin

Skill

With a few three-quarter stitches and some French knots, this glistening card design is better suited to the more experienced stitcher. It is well worth persevering with though, as the end result is stunning.

Time to stitch

Allow about 10 hours to stitch this card – that's only an hour on the train each way for a working week!

Classic Scenes Key

Anchor	DMC	Madeira	Colour
■ Cross stitch in two strands			
1007	3772	2312	Dark beige
1008	3773	2313	Light beige
1014	3777	0401	Red
■ Cross stitch in one strand			
001	White	White	White
847	3072	1805	Light blue
848	927	1708	Dark blue
877	501	1703	Dark green
905	3021	2106	Brown
■ Cross stitch blending two strands of cotton and two strands of blending filament			
001	White	White	White
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
■ Cross stitch blending one strand of cotton and two strands of blending filament			
847	3072	1805	Light blue
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
875	503	1701	Light green
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
1007	3772	2312	Dark beige
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
■ Backstitch in one strand			
848	927	1708	Dark blue *sky line*
877	501	1703	Dark green *trees and leaves*
905	3021	2106	Brown *all other details*
■ Long stitch in one strand			
905	3021	2106	Brown *trees*
■ French knots blending two strands of cotton and two strands of blending filament			
1014	3777	0401	Red
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl *berries*

■ Design Details
Our models were stitched using Anchor threads

- **Stitch count** 46 high x 44 wide
- **Design area** 7x7cm (2⅞x2⅞in)

What to do

Once you've finished stitching you'll want to mount your work in a card. Find a three-fold card mount that has a suitable aperture and colour to complement the design.

1 The card mount will be in three sections with a round opening cut out of the middle panel. Lightly mark in pencil which of your outer sections will be stuck to the back of your stitching. This saves sticking the wrong part and having to undo it later.

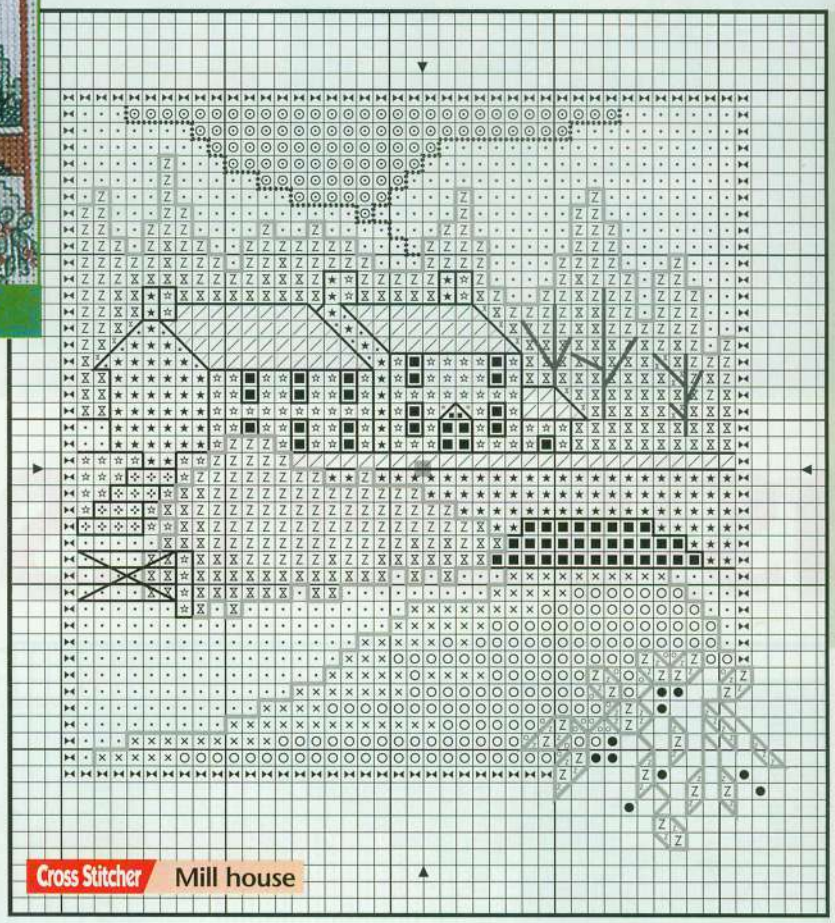
2 Place small pieces of double-sided tape all the way round the opening on the inside of the card and along the top and bottom edges of the same section.

3 Turn the card over. Hold it over your stitching so that your design motif fits centrally in the round opening. When you are happy with the position of it, press the card down onto the fabric until it sticks.

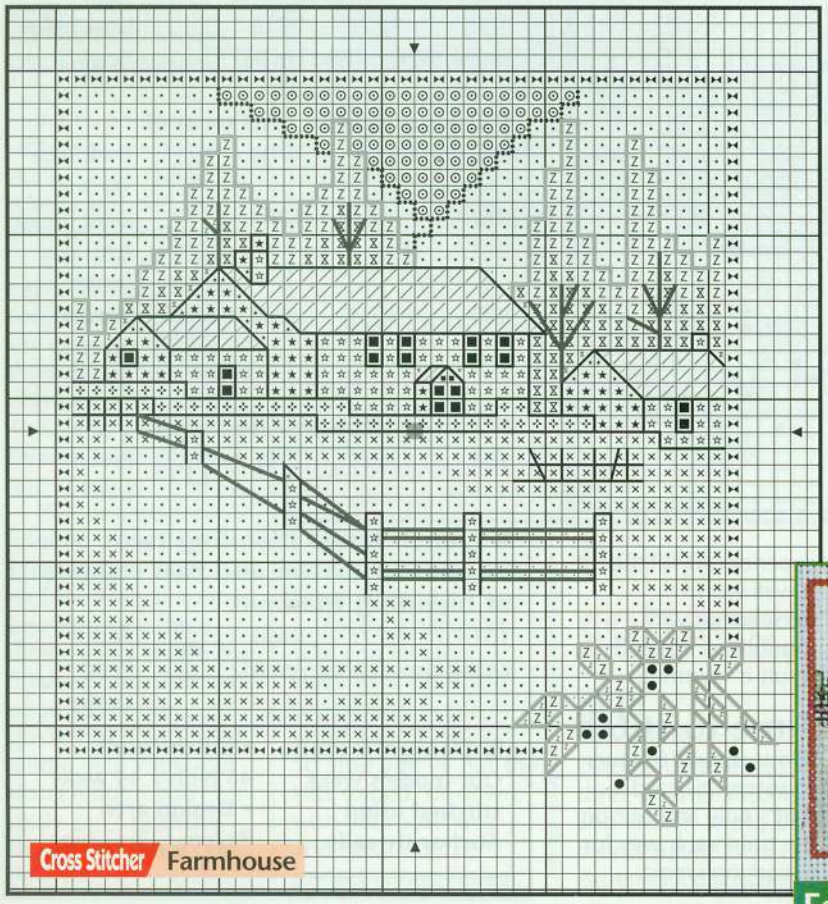
4 Turn the card over and place a piece of 2oz wadding the same size as the aperture over the back of the completed stitching.

5 Stick double-sided tape around the edges of the card flap you marked earlier, then press this down until it sticks.

Mill house



Cross Stitcher Mill house



Cross Stitcher Farmhouse

Farm-house

Skill

This farmhouse design uses some three-quarter stitches and French knots, so some experience of these stitches will help you.

Time to stitch

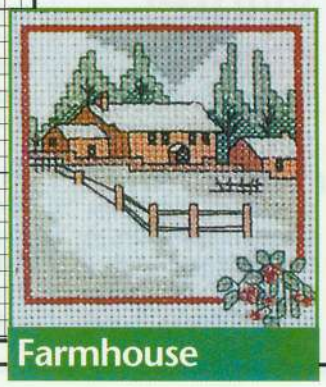
Allow about 10 hours to stitch this design, and just a few minutes to mount it in a card.

TIP

When using metallic threads, remember to keep your lengths shorter than normal to stop it from tangling

You will need

- **16HPI aida** 17x17cm (6¾x6¾in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament 032, pearl
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in) square opening, green (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in)



Farmhouse

You will need

- **16HPI aida** 17x17cm (6¾x6¾in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament 032, pearl
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in) square opening, red (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422 for your nearest stockist)
- **2oz wadding** 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in)

Mill house

Skill

This mill house design uses three-quarter stitches and some French knots, so it's best suited to stitchers with some experience.

Time to stitch

Allow about 10 hours to stitch this card.

Church-yard

Skill

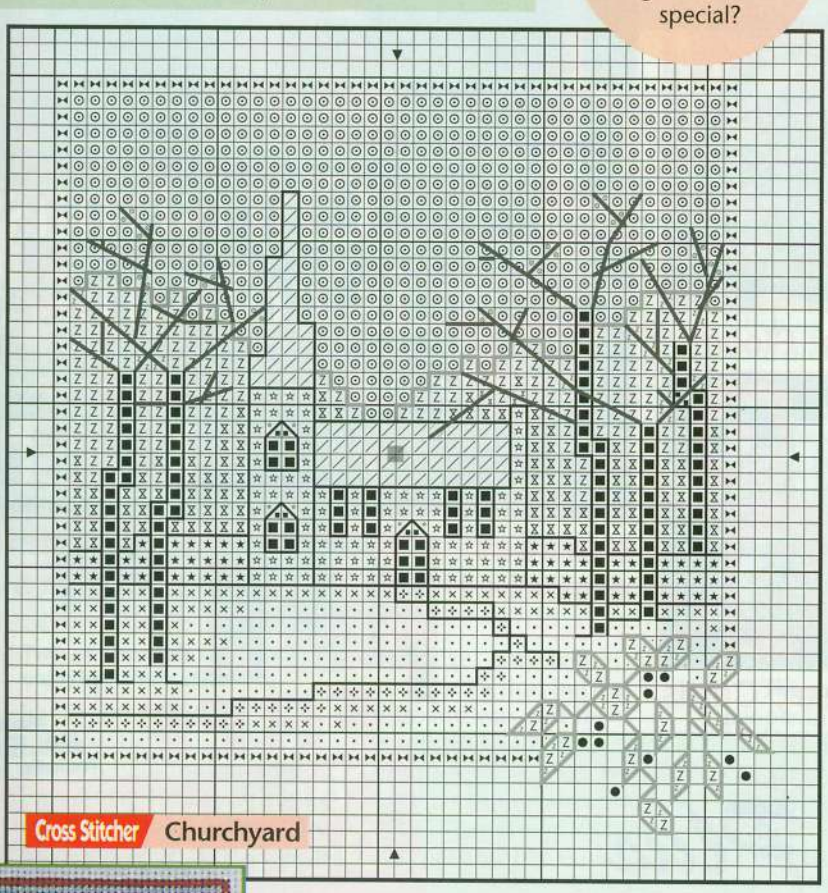
This pretty churchyard design uses a few three-quarter stitches and French knots.

Time to stitch

Allow about 10 hours to stitch this card.

TIP

Why not put these Christmas scenes in frames instead of cards and give them as a gift to someone special?



You will need

- **16HPI aida** 17x17cm (6¾x6¾in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament 032, pearl
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Card** with a 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in) square opening, white (Impress Cards, tel: 01986 781422)
- **2oz wadding** 7.5x7.5cm (3x3in)

Classic Scenes Key

Anchor	DMC	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands			
1007	3772	2312	Dark beige
1008	3773	2313	Light beige
1014	3777	0401	Red
Cross stitch in one strand			
001	White	White	White
847	3072	1805	Light blue
848	927	1708	Dark blue
877	501	1703	Dark green
905	3021	2106	Brown
Cross stitch blending two strands of cotton and two strands of blending filament			
001	White	White	White
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
Cross stitch blending one strand of cotton and two strands of blending filament			
847	3072	1805	Light blue
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
875	503	1701	Light green
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
1007	3772	2312	Dark beige
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl
Backstitch in one strand			
848	927	1708	Dark blue *sky line*
877	501	1703	Dark green *trees and leaves*
905	3021	2106	Brown *all other detail*
Long stitch in one strand			
905	3021	2106	Brown *trees*
French knots blending two strands of cotton and two strands of blending filament			
1014	3777	0401	Red
Kreinik Blending Filament 032			Pearl *berries*

Design Details
Our models were stitched using Anchor threads

- **Stitch count** 46 high x 44 wide
- **Design area** 7x7cm (2⅞x2⅞in)

Havering & District Stroke Club cross stitching group

Club members overcome their disabilities to create their own pictures

Masterstroke

Stroke victims they might be, but these club members don't let that get in the way of their cross stitching

"When you've got two hands to hold the material and you know that the needle isn't about to slip, you realise how much harder it is for anyone who has had a stroke," says Joyce Cornish of the Havering & District Stroke Club cross stitching group.

Joyce, a community nurse, is not a stroke victim but is secretary of the club and is full of admiration for the dozen or so members who have proved themselves wrong about their disability by being able to cross stitch.

"A stroke can affect your concentration and your vision as well as your movement, and many of them thought they'd never be able to master cross stitch," says Joyce.

"It certainly isn't easy for them. Some have to use table frames or those frames that stand on the floor because they can't hold the work with two hands, but it's very therapeutic. Our club is all about rehabilitation, not just sitting around drinking tea and eating biscuits. The members learn new skills as well as socialising."

Two of the club members enjoying their stitching

About 70 people meet at the club once a week for a couple of hours, beginning with exercises and music and breaking off into different groups to enjoy activities such as dominoes, pewter and art work, crosswords, fabric painting and cross stitch.

The cross stitching group is run by Amy Partridge. Amy herself isn't a stroke victim, but her husband was and he belonged to the club. He has now sadly died, but Amy continues to work with other stroke victims and pass on her skills.

"A stroke can affect your concentration and your vision as well as your movement – many club members thought they'd never be able to master cross stitch"

"Amy is very skilled at all forms of sewing," says Joyce. "She showed everyone her beautiful cross stitch work and it just inspired them to have a go. In fact it inspired me too, and I now stitch at home when I have the time. I find it very relaxing."

According to Joyce, the members of the stitching group are now so keen on their hobby that they even take it on holiday with them!

"The club always has an annual holiday at a camp – this year we went to the Isle of Wight and all the members of the group took their work with them so that they could sit outside the chalet and do a bit of cross stitching."

The group includes people in their 30s to those in their 80s, and even has a couple of gents in their 70s. All were complete novices when it came to cross stitching. Now, with Amy's patient and dedicated teaching, they are overcoming the difficulties that having a stroke has brought and are developing the skills to produce their own pictures. They have also made kneelers for the church in which the club is held, and one member has made a spectacle case, while another has made a box using plastic canvas.

Joyce says this club is different because all the committee members have had strokes, so they know the needs of other club members. "We have to rely on our own fund-raising, but Amy is always sewing, and she makes things to give away as prizes in raffles to raise money.

"As for the individual work that the club members do, that isn't raffled off, they've spent such a lot of time and effort on their work that they want to keep it to hang on the wall and look at. And I don't blame them either!"

Club secretary Joyce Cornish is also a big cross stitch fan

Your solutions

Write in to share your stitching tips & ideas with other readers

■ I'd like to share an idea with your readers about making your first stitch when using an even number of strands. Instead of using two separate threads, use one strand and put the two ends of the thread together through the needle eye. This gives you a loop. Leave about 1in of the loop hanging out the back of the fabric and pass your thread through it as you stitch. It's a great time saver and gives a really neat finish.
Diane AbuHussain, UAE

■ When I cross stitch cards I make my own frames from corrugated cardboard, cutting the aperture with a craft knife 1in larger than the design. I then cut the material about half an inch larger than the aperture and machine zigzag it to the cardboard. It keeps the material taut and stops the edges of the fabric fraying.
Mrs Jean Englefield, Birmingham

■ I loved reading your advice on washing and framing your finished work in the May issue. As regards colour running, a handy tip is to add a little salt to your water. I wash all my own cross stitch work in salty water and I've never had any problems.
Mrs L Simpson, Pontefract

HELPDESK

Just ask us your stitching queries – we're here to help!

Editor Catherine Potter can help you with any query about stitching, designing or shopping for stitching goodies.

Technical editor Anne MacGREGOR can advise on stitching, framing and making up your projects.

Production editor Clare Hodgson is full of bright ideas. Ask her about any stitching products or gadgets.

Charting assistant Anne-Marie Daniel can help you with details of almost any chart or kit, and where to find it.

Small details

Q I am very keen on stitching detailed designs, but many of these designs are very large and I don't have the time to stitch them. Do you know of any small but detailed charts or kits.
Mrs Valerie Jones, Northampton

A I'm a big fan of detailed work too, and I can easily sympathise with the lack of time there is to stitch very large projects. However, there is a wonderful book that's recently been published which could be just what you're after. *Exquisite Miniatures in Cross Stitch and other Counted Thread Techniques* by Brenda Keyes combines all the beauty of detailed designs on a smaller scale. There are 35 projects, all of which are very fine and beautiful to look at. *Exquisite Miniatures* also covers a range of techniques including blackwork, goldwork, whitework, canvaswork, Bargello, beadwork and Assisi embroidery. Published by David & Charles, it is available at most good bookshops, priced £16.99, ISBN 0-7153-0435-6.
Catherine

Small is beautiful

Hello sailor

Q I would like to stitch a nautical sampler to give to my son who is in the Royal Navy. I would like

How do I... make a neat pin cushion?

Kerry Blythe from Cardiff wrote to us:

Q I often make pin cushions to use up odd scraps of aida, but they never seem to come out square. Can you help?

1 Press your stitching and making sure it is square, trim it to size allowing for 1cm (¼in) seams. Cut a piece of backing fabric to match.

2 Right sides together, stitch the front to the back and leaving a 2.5cm (1in) gap along the bottom edge. Backstitch at either end of the opening. Trim the corners, but not too closely!

3 Turn your pin cushion the right way out, using an artist's paintbrush handle to poke out the corners. Stuff with scraps of wadding, pushing it into the corners first using the paintbrush handle.

4 To close the gap fold the raw edges in and stitch by hand using matching thread (we have used red thread for clarity).

TIP

Bran and saw-dust are old-fashioned alternatives for pincushion stuffing – both keep pins super sharp but can be messy!

Jo Verso's nautical sampler

it to have a sense of fun, rather than being very formal in style. Do you know of a suitable one and where I could get it from?
Marilyn Norman, Leeds

A Some of Jo Verso's samplers have recently become available as kits through Coats Crafts UK, one of which is a lovely fun-filled nautical sampler (ref: JV02) which should meet your needs. Stitched on 27HPI evenweave, it has a finished size of 30.5x26.5cm (12x10½in) and costs around £14. Look out for it at your local stitch shop or call Coats on 01325 394394 for details of your nearest stockist.
Anne-Marie

Charming request

Q I am looking for some small Christmas charms which don't cost the earth. I have seen some which cost about £5 for a pack of two, but this is too much for my small budget. Could you recommend something suitable?
Cathy Cook, Southampton

A When walking round a recent stitching show these super Christmas charms really caught my eye. You can see at a glance that they're hand-painted, but they are still relatively inexpensive – around £2.25 for a card holding two charms. The ones shown here can be stitched onto your embroidery snugly, as they are flat-backed and are sewn on as you would sew on a button. They would look super on calendars, cards or other Christmas projects that you'd like to make extra special. They're from the Christmas Treasures range of La Mode Buttons and you can buy them through Hantex stockists. Tel: 01908 511428 for a list of stockists near you. **Clare**

Fun Christmas buttons

Subtle flowers

Q I would like to try stitching with flower threads which I've heard can give a more subtle effect than standard stranded cottons. Do you know where I can get these, and if I need to know any special tips for working with them?
Samantha Millington, Brighton

Subtle flower threads

A Yes, you're right, flower threads have a matt finish so they are perfect if you are trying to achieve a more subtle, softer effect than stitching with stranded cottons. Flower thread or nordin is a rustic cotton thread which is ideal for stitching on linen, but which can also be used on other evenweave fabrics and aida. It is about twice as thick as stranded cotton, so when stitching a chart that requires two strands of stranded cotton you would only need a single length of flower thread. **Anne**

Football fanatic

Q I am writing to ask if there are any cross stitch kits available with football logos on? My husband is an avid Liverpool supporter and I would like to do a cross stitch picture for him of the Liverpool football club emblem.
Mrs Tina Walters, Burton-on-Trent

A The Needlecraft Centre specialise in football and other sporting crests. Their Liverpool kit measures 8x12in (20 x 31cm) when finished and will cost you £15.99 plus p&p. To order just call: 01227 266470 with your credit card details handy.
Catherine

Stitch up those reds!

Find that chart!

Hunting high and low for that elusive chart? Just write in and ask Anne-Marie to track it down

Are there any books available with cross stitch charts of Disney characters such as Winnie the Pooh or Mickey Mouse?
Mrs S Bishop, Aylesbury

There are no books available containing cross stitch Disney charts, but they are available in kit form from Designer Stitches. Enquire at your local stitch shop or tel: 0161 4910006 to order a brochure priced £4.

I am having trouble locating two books of charts – *A Baby's Keepsake* and *Baby Volume 2*. They are part of the Precious Moments series by Gloria and Pat. Can you help?
Janice Walker, Ayrshire

These charts are both available from DMC. *A Baby's Keepsake* costs approx £5.90 and *Baby Volume 2* costs approx £7.85. Tel: 0161 2811040 for stockists.

Please could you tell me if any companies produce a kit of the village of Polperro in Cornwall?
Alice Gilman, Powys

Polperro Harbour

Polperro Harbour is available as a petit point (small scale tapestry) kit from Needlepoise, priced approx £13.50. Tel: 01484 684202.

I am looking for a kit or chart of a collie dog. Can you help?
Mrs Anstey, Poole

Craft House supplies a kit called Spilt Milk which shows a mother with her four pups and costs £25.99. Contact the Craft House tel: 0161 905 3320 for more details. Readicut Crafts also supply a kit in half cross stitch. Call them on 01924 810811.

The Craft House collie

Butternut Road

Q I am looking for the stockists of the *Butternut Road* series of charts, especially a Victorian lady in a green dress. If you can help I would be very grateful.
Liz Calvert, Melling

A The chart you are looking for is called The Teacher and is priced £6 from Wimble Bees. Tel: 01455 221000 for more details of their range of Butternut Road designs.
Anne-Marie

Val with the tool of her trade – her dual control Ford Escort

Valerie Shaw deserves a medal – she's a driving instructor, but with a difference. She presents her examiners with a special gift, which helps her to relax too. Joanna Foster explains...

Driven to distraction

The proud teenager heaves a huge sigh of relief as the driving test examiner says, "You've passed!" and firmly shakes his hand. The full licence is his at long last... and Valerie Shaw steps forward to give him a specially hand-stitched key fob.

The Gawsworth School of Motoring 'trophy' is a unique reward for all those difficult hours of learning – and for Val, it's a perfect way of dealing with one of the most stressful of jobs.

"I'm not sure what boys think of a cross stitched key fob. The girls like it. But I've got to be careful not to make it too fancy..."

After a tough day being driven around by over-zealous teenagers and nervous pensioners, driving instructor Val likes to put her feet up and relax with her cross stitch. It's her way of coping with the stress of running her own business.

Relaxation technique

"That's one of the reasons why I turned from lace making to cross stitch," she explains. "It's extremely relaxing. I don't have to concentrate so hard on it."

Like many stitchers, Val generously gives away much of what she stitches as gifts to friends. But she has taken this act of giving – quite typical among cross stitchers – one step further. Every learner who passes their driving test with Val is presented with a stitched key fob. It's a great moment for Val.

Nerve-racking

Val started up her own one-woman driving school this year because she was looking for a part time job but wanted to be in control of how much time she put in. So far, she's coping very well with what the day throws at her.

"When you take people for their test, sitting waiting for them to come back is really nerve-racking. But when they come in, the look on their faces when they've passed their test is worth all the hard work," she says. "I don't think I'll ever get used to the excitement and huge thrill you get when someone has passed."

Bright spark

The idea for the congratulatory key fob started when Val was given a promotional ball point pen. Although she wasn't very impressed with the pen, it sparked off an idea.

"I wanted something a bit different," she explains. "I happened to be playing with my key fob which had a piece of lace in it. I thought, 'I could do something like this'."

Val worked out her own design for the key fobs in her spare time. It is based on the 'mirrors-signal-manoeuvre' lesson that she spends all day reminding her learners about.

"My first ideas were far too big. I wanted the impact but I wanted it to look acceptable as well," she explains. "Of course, it's good advertising for the company, too.

"I don't know if my clients try harder to get their trophies," she laughs.

"I'm not sure what boys think of a cross stitched key fob. The girls like it. But I've got to be careful not to make it too fancy..."

Better than yoga

Cross stitching is renowned for calming you down – it seems like the perfect hobby for Val. But stress relief is not the only reason why she loves cross stitch.

"The best thing about stitching is that you get such satisfying results out of something which is a remedy. You can do yoga or relaxation classes and you're a calm person at the end of it. Not only am I calm after a cross stitching session, but I've also got something to show for it."

Val finds cross stitch calms her down after a nerve-racking day!

Valerie's pearls of wisdom

1 Save the free needles that come with the cover kits and put them into needlecases you have stitched for Christmas presents.

2 If you like to back your cross stitch bookmarks, self adhesive felt is a godsend.

3 To keep delicate stitched bookmarks clean, seal them in the clear plastic envelopes that bobbin lacemakers use to display their work. It makes the bookmark much more hard wearing and keeps it clean. You can buy them from most needlecraft shops.

4 To avoid those greasy marks caused by round embroidery hoops, sew a handkerchief around the hoop before you start stitching.

Are men better drivers?

Cross Stitcher couldn't resist asking Val that million dollar question. Here's what she says: "Statistically, women have less accidents, which means they must be better than men, but unfortunately that's changing. More and more women are driving in a macho way. Generally, it's all down to what they've been taught. If you can get the attitude right too, anybody can be a good driver."

Which Kit?

Tried and tested – six fabulous cross stitch picture kits, all with a Christmassy feel

Festive Window

Eva Rosenstand: 14-002
Rrp £25.00

This delightful design of a child lighting candles on a Christmas wreath is excellent value for money. The kit contains a clear chart, concise instructions and, although the threads are not pre-coded, they are separated into four groups to make them easy to identify and tie onto the organiser. The kit is available with either linen or aida and has some half stitches but no three-quarter stitches, making it ideal for any stitcher.
Sarah Doe

What you get

- 27HPI cream linen or aida
- Stranded cotton – 28 colours
- Needle, chart, thread organiser and instructions
- Gold metallic thread
- Design size – 11½x8in (29x20cm)

Ease of working	✕✕✕✕✕
Chart quality	✕✕✕✕✕
Instructions	✕✕✕✕✕
Value for money	✕✕✕✕✕
Total Rating	20/20

■ **Available From**
Eva Rosenstand
PO Box 22,
Saffron Walden
Essex CB10 2XZ
☎ 01799 525703

Alan Marley's Gracious Era

Dimensions: 3821
Rrp £30.50

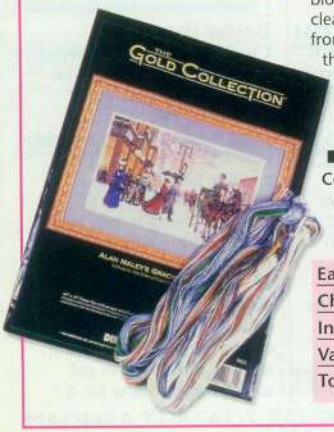
What you get

- 16HPI dove grey aida
- Stranded cotton – 40 colours
- Needle, chart, thread organiser and instructions
- Design size – 10x16in (25x41cm)

Alan Mayley cleverly uses blends of two different shades of thread to subtly melt one colour into another in this Victorian winter street scene. He uses whole stitches for the figures in the foreground and half stitches for the background, to give a wonderfully detailed, three-dimensional effect to the finished picture. Coloured symbols on the chart represent blocks of colour, making the clear chart even easier to work from. I shy from recommending this kit to novices, as it is large, reasonably detailed and would take a lot of time to complete. **Sarah Doe**

■ **Available From**
Coats Crafts UK, Consumer Liaison, McMullen Road, Darlington DL1 1YQ
☎ 01325 365457

Ease of working	✕✕✕✕✕
Chart quality	✕✕✕✕✕
Instructions	✕✕✕✕✕
Value for money	✕✕✕✕✕
Total Rating	18/20



Holly Tree Cottage

Needlepoise: DD226X
Rrp £12.00

What you get

- 18HPI white aida
- Stranded cotton – 21 colours
- Needle, chart, thread organiser and instructions
- Design size – 4x6in (10x15cm)

Using whole stitches and a small amount of backstitch, this pretty kit is suitable for any stitcher. The designer has given the snow-capped mountains in the background extra detail by blending white and green threads together. Containing good quality materials, *Holly Tree Cottage* has a clear hand drawn chart. And, although the threads are not pre-organised, they are made easy to identify by a list in the key of the Anchor shade numbers.
Sarah Doe

■ **Available From**
Needlepoise
16 Upperbridge,
Holmfirth, West Yorkshire HD7 1JS
☎ 01484 684202

Ease of working	✕✕✕✕✕
Chart quality	✕✕✕✕
Instructions	✕✕✕✕✕
Value for money	✕✕✕✕✕
Total Rating	19/20

Where to buy the kits

Look for these kits in your local needlecraft shop. If you have difficulty finding any of them, contact the supplier we have listed who will be able to give you the name of your nearest stockist. Where a kit is listed as mail order only, you can order direct from the company. Always quote the name and reference number of the kit.

What our ratings mean

The mark we give out of 20 is an overall assessment of four components – marked independently of one another: the complexity of the design, the clarity of the chart, the quality of the stitching instructions and advice, and the price of the kit.

Excellent	XXXXX
Very good	XXXX
Good	XXX
Fair	XX
Poor	X

The Toyshop & Inside The Toyshop

Masterplan
Rrp £12.99

What you get

- 14HPI white aida
- Stranded cotton – 19 colours / 15 colours
- Needle, chart, thread organiser and instructions
- Design size – approx 4½x5¾in (11x15cm)

Both these designs appear simplistic but can be quite confusing to stitch. The backstitch details are worked in a number of different colours, but unfortunately the instructions do not clearly illustrate the difference between the thread shades. Although there is a description of the backstitch details in the key, it isn't instantly apparent where these details apply. This coupled with the high number of fractional stitches to work would make the kit a disappointing purchase for anyone other than the most experienced needlewoman.
Sarah Doe

■ **Available From**
Masterplan, Halton, Lancaster LA2 6QG
☎ 01524 811182

Ease of working	XX
Chart quality	XX
Instructions	XXX
Value for money	XX
Total Rating	9/20

Teddy Christmas

Stitch Direct: 10178
Rrp £17.25

What you get

- 16HPI cream aida
- Stranded cotton – 16 colours
- Needle, chart, thread organiser and instructions
- Pre-strung 2mm gold beads
- Design size – 11¼x6¼in (29x16cm)

This cute design of a teddy's family Christmas is given extra sparkle with gold beads. Don't worry, you don't have to stitch them all on individually – they are strung together ready to drape on the tree. I couldn't find any instructions on how to attach the beads to the stitched piece – but couching them into position seemed to work. The clear chart and the fact that the design is made up of just whole stitches makes *Teddy Christmas* a kit suitable for any level of experience.
Sarah Doe

■ **Available From**
Stitch Direct, The Old Malthouse, Clarence Street, Bath BA1 5NS
☎ 01225 484050

Ease of working	XXXX
Chart quality	XXXX
Instructions	XXXX
Value for money	XXXXX
Total Rating	17/20

Christmas Warms The Heart

Charland Designs: Seasons of the Heart No 1
Rrp £14.95

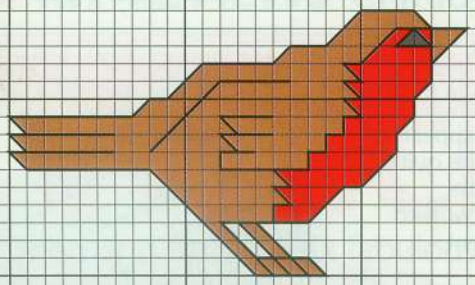
What you get

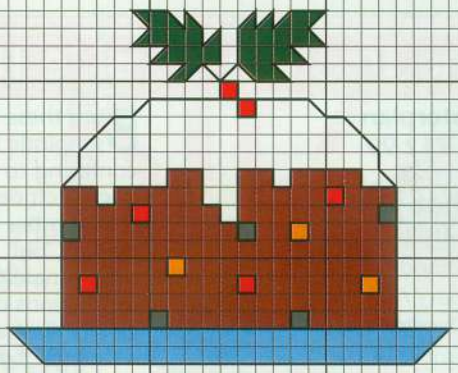
- 28HPI cream linen
- Stranded cotton – two colours
- Needle, chart, and instructions
- Overdyed floss, cotton perlé, gold blending filament, beads and a heart shaped charm
- Design size – 6¾x4½in (17x11cm)

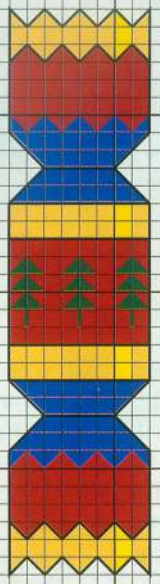
Working a sampler is a traditional way to learn new stitches, so teach yourself some new skills with this challenging kit. The design uses a wide variety of stitches and threads, some beads and a heart-shaped charm. And although every stitch is not always clearly represented on the chart, the instructions give a step by step guide to each one. This kit is definitely for the more experienced stitcher and should give much pleasure when finished.
Sarah Doe

■ **Available From**
The Coleshill Collection Orchard House, Amersham Road, Chesham, Bucks HP5 1NE
☎ 01494 771737

Ease of working	XXX
Chart quality	XXX
Instructions	XXXX
Value for money	XXXXX
Total Rating	15/20

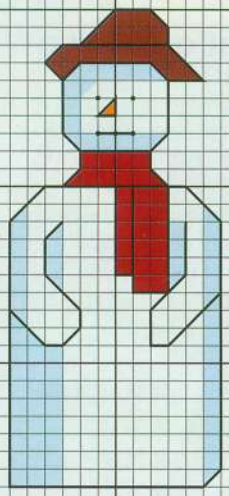


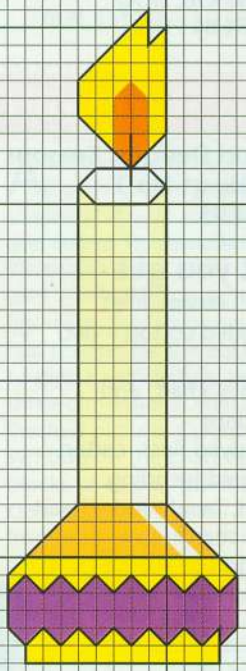


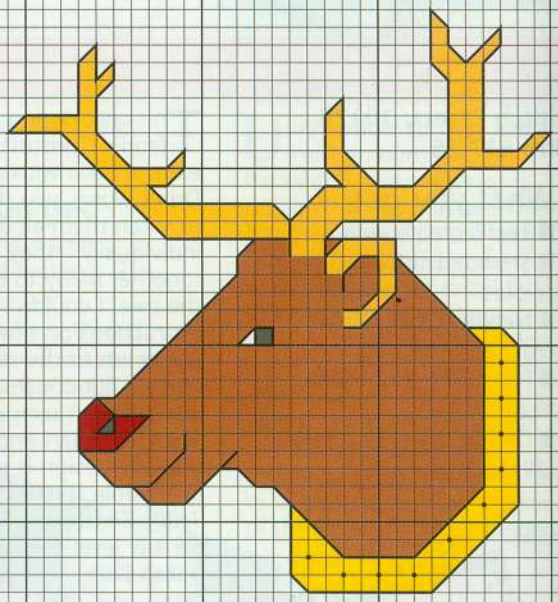


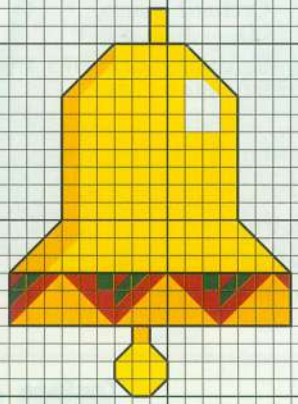
Cross Stitcher Design Library

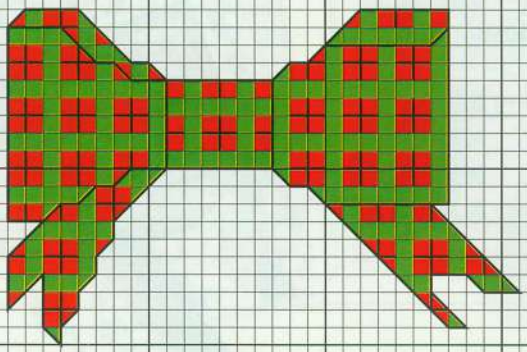
Just right for quick cards and gifts, Christine Howes' Christmas designs make great sampler motifs too

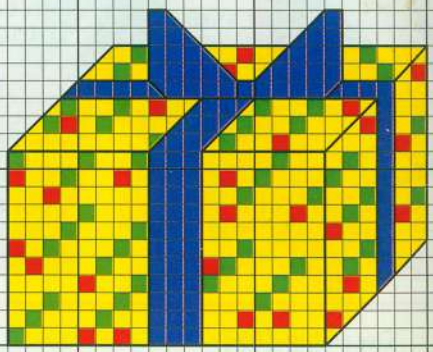


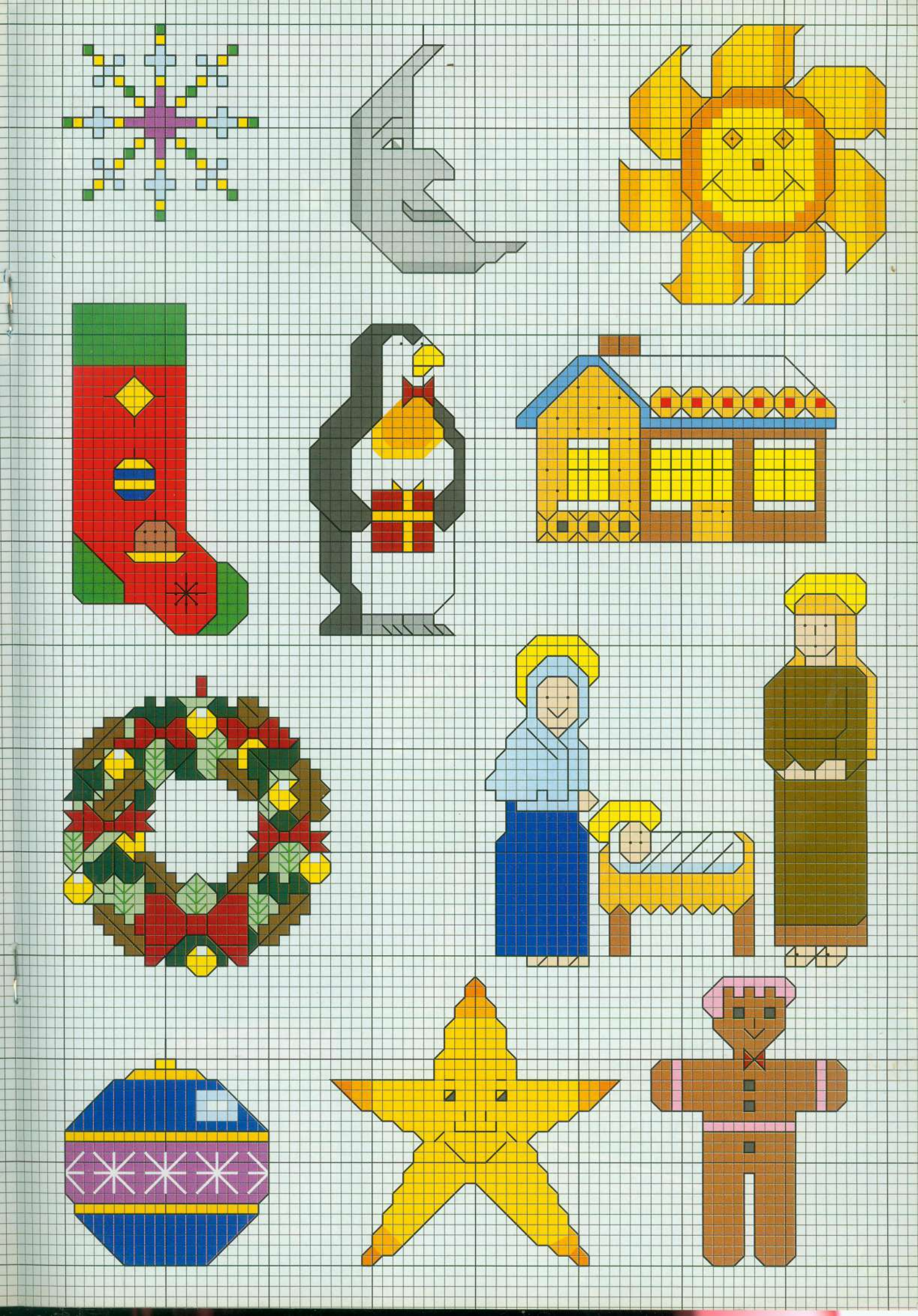












Cross Stitcher
Bird series No.4

Mail Order To order all the materials you need to stitch these beautiful birds, turn to page 84 for our exclusive mail order offer

T'wit t'woo!

Stitch these beady-eyed owls to grace the walls of your living room or hallway. Designed by Debra Page, they'll add beauty, poise and charm to any setting

Anyone who has heard an owl gently calling out into the twilight, or who has been lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one in flight, will understand this nocturnal bird's magical, mysterious appeal.

This month Debra Page has been inspired to create four designs especially for you, so you can capture the barn owl, the little owl, the long-eared owl and the tawny owl in cross stitch. Then simply sit back and relax, and enjoy gazing back at them from the comfort of your armchair!

The owls look superb when stitched as a full set and mounted in matching frames, but don't be put off if you don't fancy stitching all four. You'll be pleased to know they look just as effective as a pair, or as single designs. Why not pick just one of your favourite owls to give yourself a treat, or to stitch as a charming gift for a good friend?

Each owl picture will take less than a fortnight to finish, based on stitching for a couple of hours every day. First check the Stitcher's Guide below, and then turn the page to find all the charts and keys you need.

You will need

- **28HPI jobelan** 28x28cm (11x11in) nordic blue
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Frame** with 14.5x12.5cm (5¾x5in) rectangular opening, dark wood with gilt inset
- **2oz wadding** 14.5x12.5cm (5¾x5in)

Skill

These owls have some fractional stitches and several colour changes.

Time to stitch

Each owl will take about 20 hours to finish – that's less than two weeks if you stitch for a couple of hours each evening.

Framing your work

1 Cut a piece of acid-free board to the same size as the inside of your frame.

2 Cut a piece of 2oz wadding to the same size as the board and stick it on with double-sided sticky tape or glue.

3 Place your stitched piece the right way up on top of the wadding, making sure the design lies square and central.

4 Hold the stitched piece in place with small pieces of masking tape. Then lace the back of the fabric over the card with strong cotton.

5 Place the covered card inside the frame and push in the backing board. Your work is now ready to hang on the wall. For a more detailed explanation on how to finish your projects turn to page 89.

What's next?

If you like these owl designs, you'll love next month's set of four game birds – the grouse, partridge, pheasant and quail. Look out for them in our Christmas issue, on sale on **Tuesday 25th November**

The finished design

Barn Owl

The flash of white feathers illuminated by your car headlights probably belongs to the barn owl. His elegance is beautifully captured in this simple-to-stitch design. Mount him in a dark wooden frame for the best effect.

Barn owl key

Cross stitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
648	900	1902	Pewter grey
676	891	2208	Light straw
680	901	2210	Dark straw
725	291	0113	Dark yellow
727	293	0110	Light yellow
729	890	2209	Med straw
3022	8581	1812	Med grey
3023	900	1902	Light grey
3072	847	1709	V light grey
3787	273	1811	Dark grey

Backstitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White – *stars*

Backstitch in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
310	403	Black	Black *eyes and claws*
780	310	2214	Copper *feet and feather outlines*
3787	273	1811	Dark grey outlines *all other outlines and details*

French knots in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White *eye highlights*

Design details

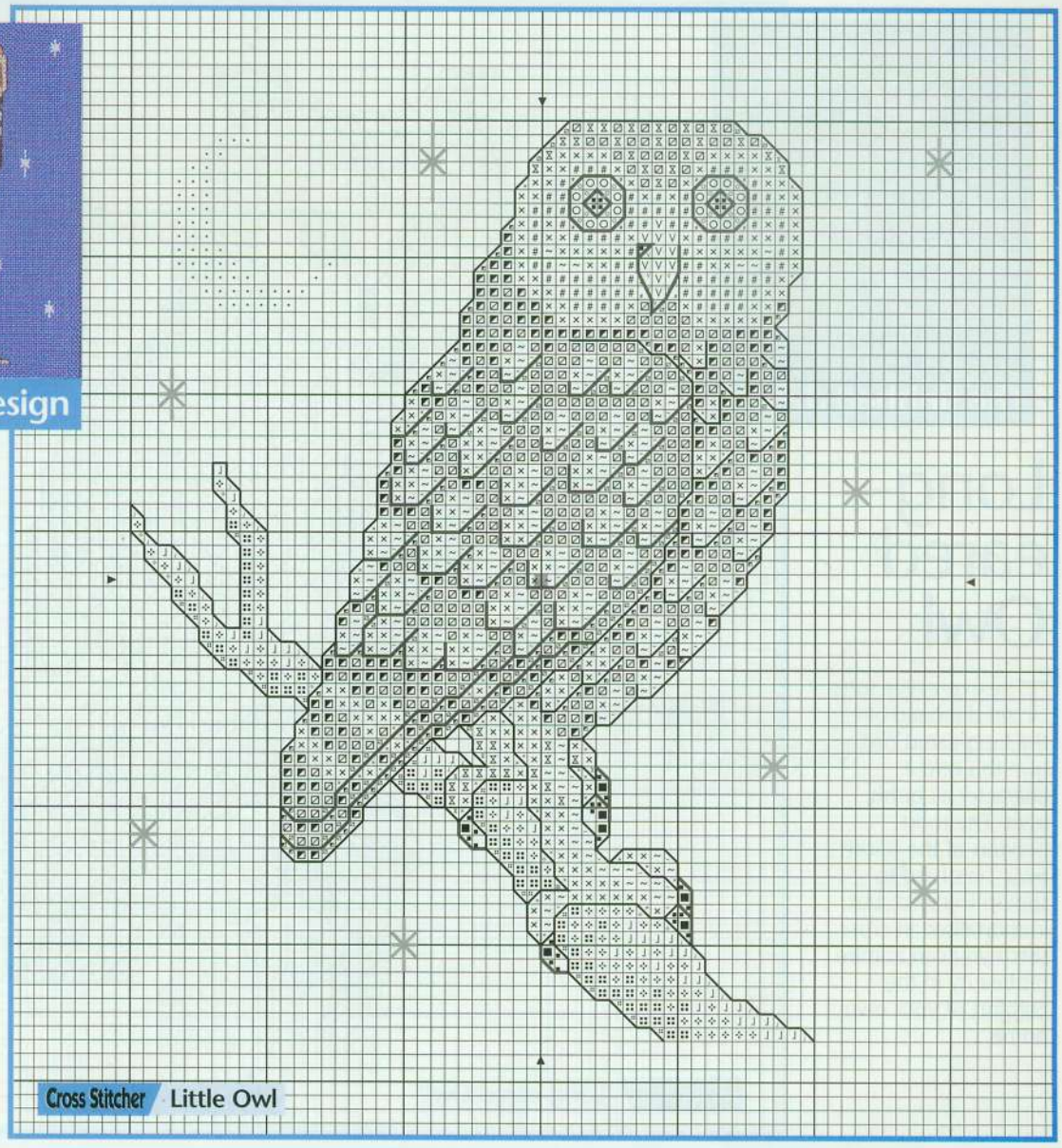
Our model was stitched using DMC threads on 28HPI evenweave over two threads.

- **Stitch count** 71 high x 67 wide
- **Design area** 13x12cm (5⅛x4¾in)

The finished design

Little Owl

The little owl's bright yellow eyes haunt the quarries and farmland of southern Britain. The delicate white flecks in his feathers stand out against the dark blue of the evenweave fabric, making him an impressive sight however you choose to display him.



Cross Stitcher Little Owl

Little owl key

Cross stitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White
307	289	0104	Light yellow
310	403	Black	Black
436	1045	2011	Dark tan
712	275	2101	Cream
725	291	0113	Dark yellow
738	361	2013	Light tan
3022	8581	1812	Med grey
3023	900	1902	Light grey
3031	381	2003	Dark brown
3781	905	2106	Med brown
3787	273	1811	Dark grey
3790	393	1905	Light brown

Backstitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White *stars*

Backstitch in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
310	403	Black	Black *eyes, beak, claws, feathers*
844	1041	1810	V dark grey *all other outlines and details*

French knots in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White *eye highlights*

Design details

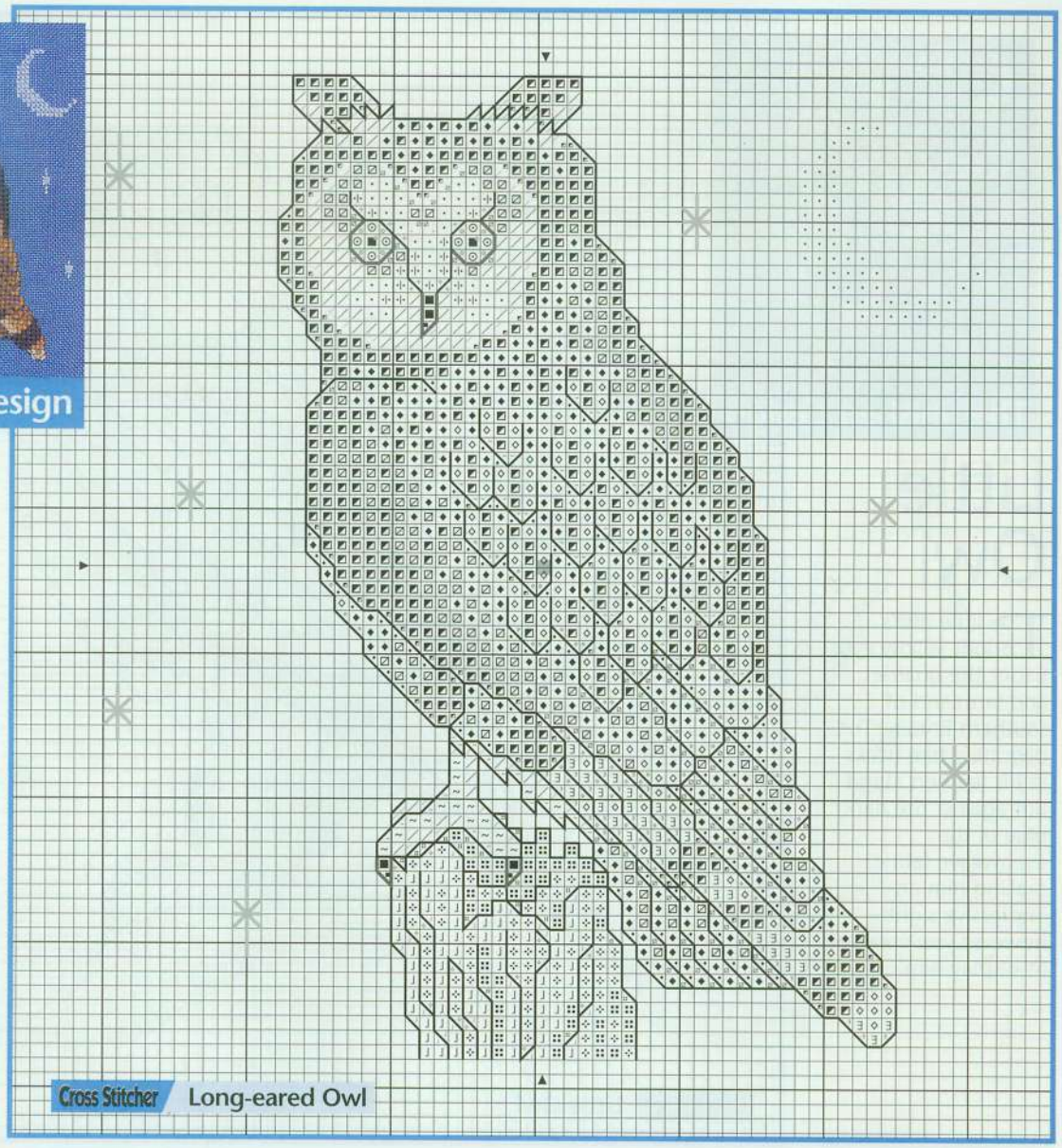
Our model was stitched using DMC threads on 28HPI evenweave over two threads.

- **Stitch count** 67 high x 60 wide
- **Design area** 12x11cm (4¾x4¼in)

The finished design

Long-eared Owl

The expressive tufts on the head of the long-eared owl give this bird a character all of his own. The most nervous of the British owls, he's hard to spot in the wild, but immortalised in cross stitch you can admire his beauty in the comfort of your own home.



Long-eared owl key

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
420	375	2105	Medium tan
437	367	2013	Light tan
676	891	2208	Straw
712	275	2101	Cream
721	324	0309	Orange
762	234	1804	V light grey
839	359	1913	Light brown
869	906	2106	Dark tan
3022	8581	1812	Medium grey
3023	900	1902	Light grey
3031	381	2003	Dark brown
3787	273	1811	Dark grey

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Backstitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White *stars*
Backstitch in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *eyes, beak and claws*
844	1041	1810	V dark grey *all other outlines and details*
French knots in one strand			
White	001	White	White *eye highlights*

Design details

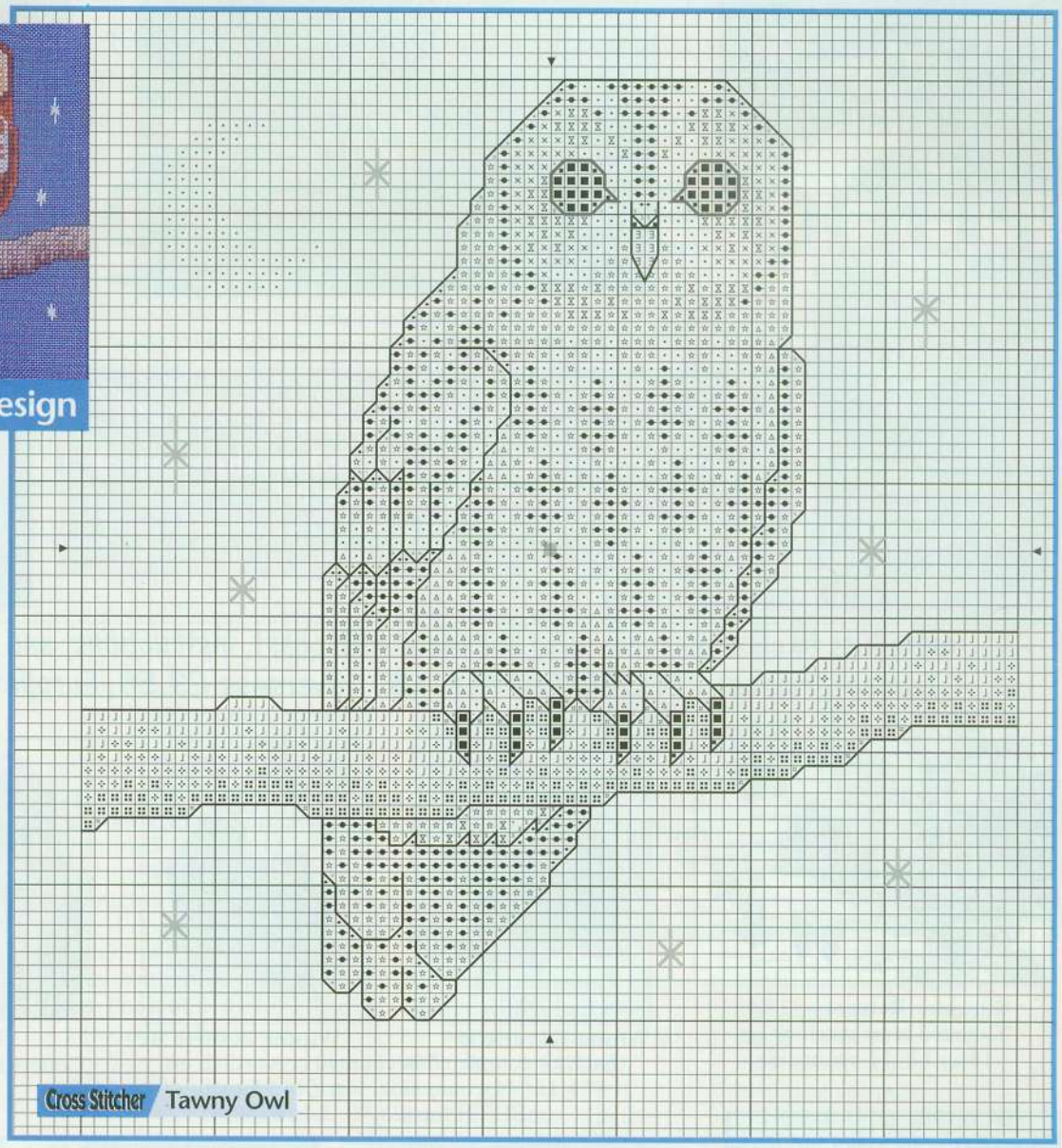
Our model was stitched using DMC threads on 28HPI evenweave over two threads.

- **Stitch count** 68 high x 61 wide
- **Design area (approx)** 12x11cm (4⅞x4⅜in)

The finished design

Tawny Owl

More chestnut, or grey, than tawny, this wise owl swoops through our towns and cities in the dead of night. Mount this picture as a gift to thank a friend for their words of wisdom, or hang it in your study to enlighten and inspire.



Cross Stitcher Tawny Owl

Tawny owl key

Cross stitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
434	310	2009	Light brown
436	1045	2011	Dark tan
676	891	2208	Straw
738	361	2013	Light tan
3022	8581	1812	Med grey
3023	900	1902	Light grey
3072	847	1709	V light grey
3781	905	2106	Dark brown
3787	273	1811	Dark grey

Backstitch in two strands

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White *stars*
3022	8581	1812	Medium grey *eye outlines*

Backstitch in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
844	1041	1810	V dark grey *all other outlines and details*

French knots in one strand

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
White	001	White	White *eye highlights*

Design details

Our model was stitched using DMC threads on 28HPI evenweave over two threads.

- **Stitch count**
  70 high x 70 wide
- **Design area (approx)**
  13x13cm (5x5in)

Bumble bees don't have to be bad

It's not easy to realise a dream of turning your hobby into a business, but that's just what one stitcher has done despite suffering from a debilitating illness. Amanda Cox reports

Against the odds

Keren Riste's inspiring story shows how it's possible to fight back against the stresses and strains of life in the late twentieth century. Keren's world was turned upside down when she was struck down by ME, or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome in 1996. She was in her mid twenties, with a good job and a home to run.

"A lot of people with ME find that cross stitch is their salvation through the really difficult times"

"Everyone's story is different but the main symptom of ME is an overwhelming feeling of tiredness. If you even slightly exert yourself you feel completely worn out.

"All my strength went – I couldn't even lift a cup! Initially, I couldn't even read or write, my concentration was so bad."

When I spoke to Keren I was immediately struck by her warmth and friendliness. Kerry's innate cheeriness lead her to take control of her illness and the times when she was unable even to get out of bed in the morning constructively.

Positive thoughts

Having to rest frequently meant that she had a lot of time to do her cross stitch. "When you're in bed for long periods at a time, cross stitch is the one thing you can do. A lot of people with ME find that it's their salvation through the really difficult times."

And, of course, you also spend a lot of time thinking when you're confined to bed and, fortunately, Keren's thoughts were creative... She'd only been cross stitching for a few years but was inspired by a Winnie the Pooh alphabet she had stitched for her niece.

Bee jolly

"There were these bees around the honey pot in the design. I thought, 'Why does the bee always have to be the villain?'"

"It was always a pipe dream before I got ill to get some designs off the ground. But it became a necessity when it became clear that I wouldn't be able to do full time job for a while. I also wanted to give something back to the charity which had given me support (Action for ME and Chronic Fatigue)," Keren explains. "Well, that's the idea – whether it'll work or not..." she adds with a smile.

So Keren's business grew from this determination, and one wonders if she would ever have found the time to initiate such a venture had her life not been changed so dramatically as a result of her illness. The whimsical cross stitch designs show her underlying character and humour – maybe the design entitled *Bee Jolly* most encapsulates her inspiring courage.

Here at *Cross Stitcher* we wish her every success as she nurtures herself and her small business and hope that she'll continue to raise money and people's awareness of this debilitating illness through her cross stitch.

If you're interested in Keren's Bertie Bee designs, the kits cost £5.50 each and the designs are available as charts for £1.50 each. Prices include p&p. Five percent of each sale goes to the charity Action For ME. Make cheques out to K Riste and send your order to 2/b Highfield Close, Pembury, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 4HQ.

For more information about 'Action for ME and Chronic Fatigue' call 01749 670799.

This Winnie the Pooh alphabet inspired Keren's Bertie Bee designs

Keren before ME changed her life

Keren's top five reasons to do cross stitch

1. Cross stitch is easy to do – you don't need to be artistic to follow a chart.
2. Cross stitch is a very versatile craft – you can create anything from a cartoon to a landscape with the same technique.
3. Cross stitch is mentally and physically relaxing.
4. Cross stitch is very satisfying – there's always a sense of achievement.
5. Cross stitch gives pleasure to others – a cross stitched gift is a really personal one.

Deck the halls

...with boughs of holly – and baubles and bows and bells and trinkets! Carol Phillipson's Christmas decorations are easy to stitch and will take you just a few evenings to complete

What better way to decorate your home than with cross stitch? These small and simple decorations look great hung from a tree, or used to adorn a mantelpiece, tree tub or even your Christmas cake.

The baubles, bells and bows will make a super addition to your existing tree ornaments, and as they're mounted in inexpensive gold plastic frames they'll only make a small whole in your budget.

Alternatively, stitch the slightly larger designs to mount in gold frames for your wall, or stitch one of the aida bands to go round your Christmas cake or tree tub.

Some of the bells and baubles use sparkly metallic threads to add glitz to the designs. If you've not used these threads before, don't worry. Have a quick look at the tips below before you start, and you won't go wrong.

The small round tree decorations will take about two hours to stitch. The larger round ones will take about five hours. Each repeat of the shelf edging will take about 15 hours to finish.

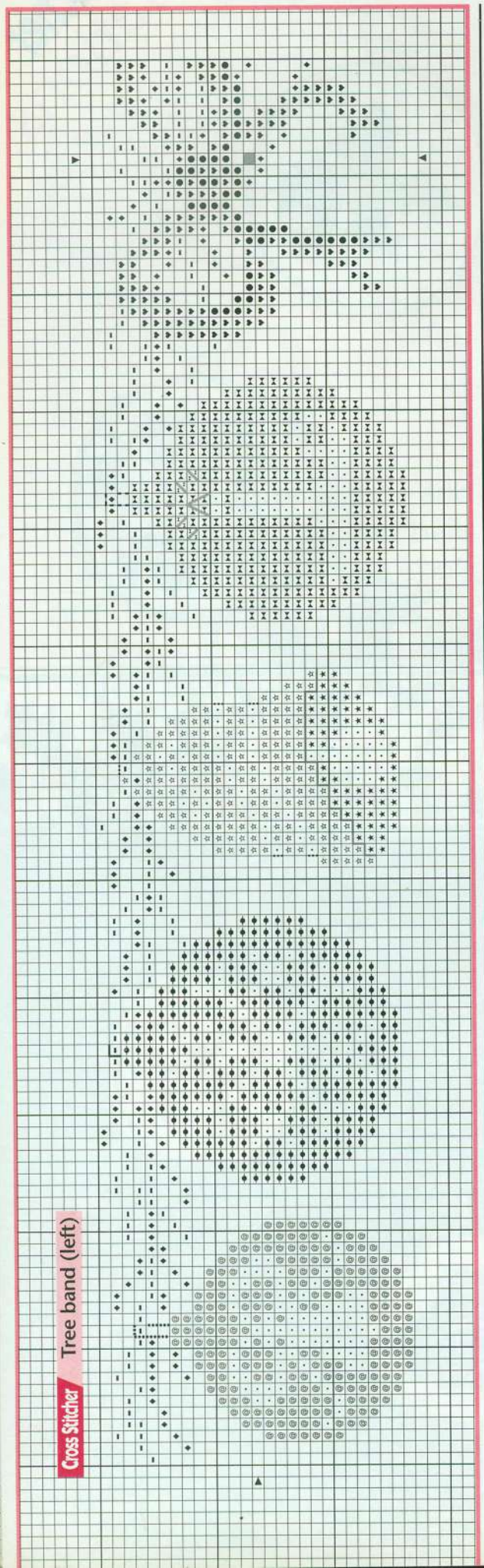
The length of the band around the tree will depend on the size of tub you use – remember to leave an even gap between each motif and allow about two hours to finish each one.

■ When using metallic threads keep the length shorter than normal to prevent it from becoming tangled.
■ Knot the blending filament on to the eye of your needle to stop it from slipping.

What's next?

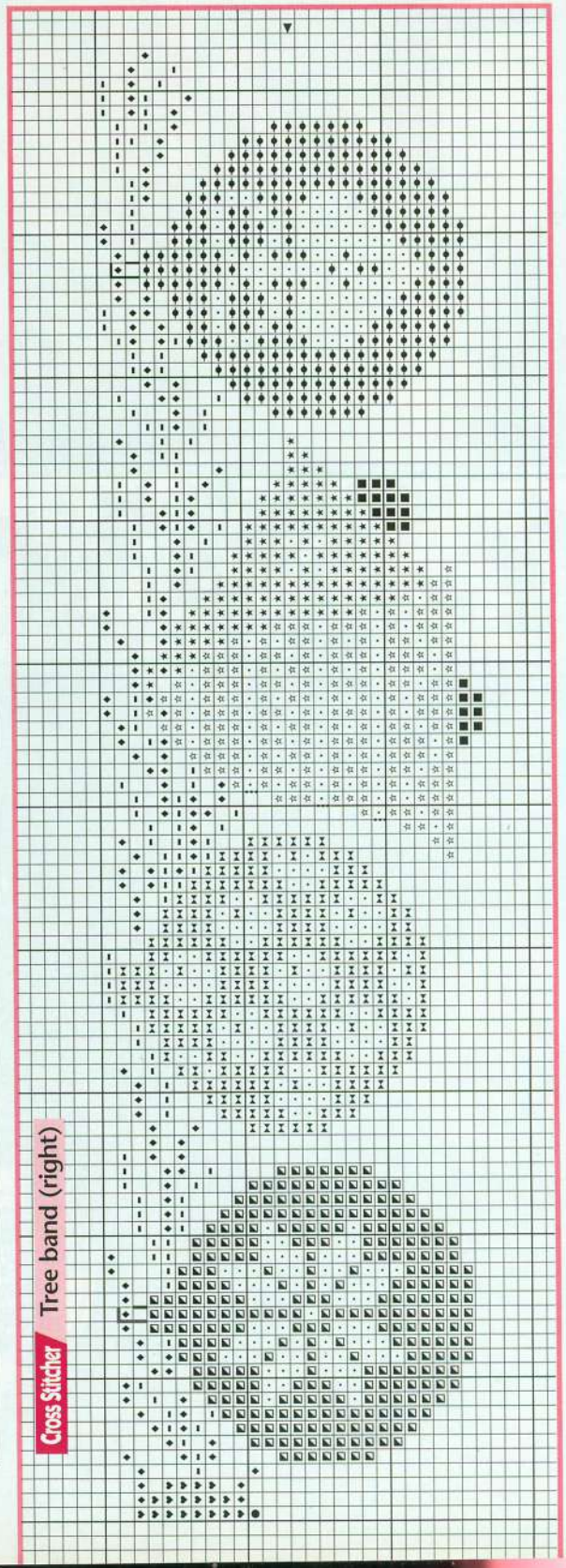
Look out for more quick festive designs in next month's Christmas issue of *Cross Stitcher*. It's on sale from Tuesday 25th November.

Cross Stitcher Decorations



You will need

- **16HPI aida** 10x10cm (4x4in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament 003HL, red hi-lustre; 006, blue; 008HL, green hi-lustre
- **Tapestry needle** Size 26
- **Gold coloured plastic frames** 6.3cm (2½in) diameter (available from Framecraft, tel: 0121 212 0551)
- **Iron-on interfacing** 10x10cm (4x4in)



Christmas tree band

Skill

This design uses whole stitches only, but because of its size it is best suited to stitchers with some experience.

Time to stitch

Each motif will take about two hours to stitch. Measure around your Christmas tree tub so that you how many motifs to stitch and what length of aida band to use.

Baubles & bells

Skill

This design is simple to stitch, even if you're a complete novice.

Time to stitch

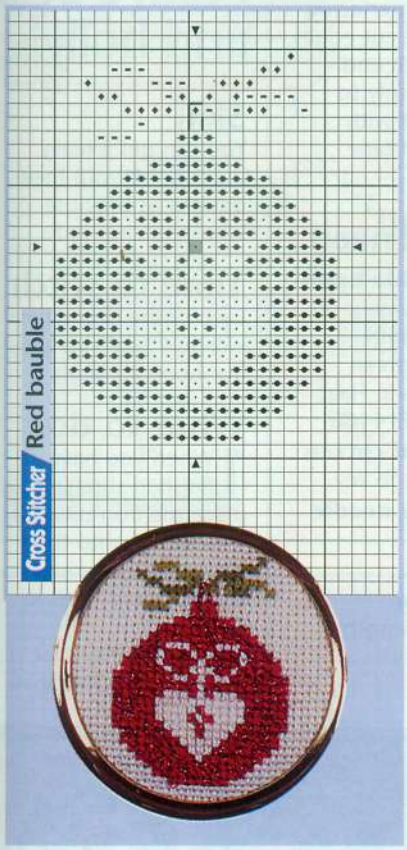
Each of the small designs will take you two to three hours to stitch and mount.

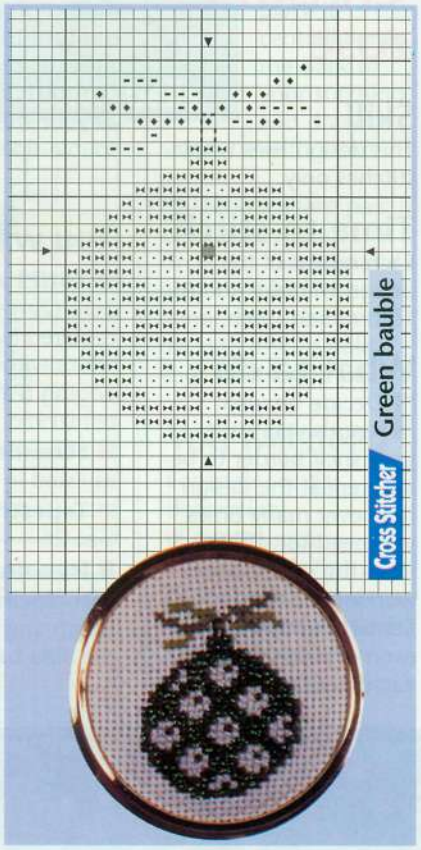
What to do

1 When you have finished stitching, place the iron-on interfacing onto the

You will need

- **16HPI aida band** 5cm (2in) wide x required length, white with red edging (Fabric Flair, tel: 01985 214466)
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament 003HL, red hi-lustre; 012, purple; 018HL, navy hi-lustre; 006, blue; 008HL, green hi-lustre
- **Tapestry needle** Size 26
- **Iron-on interfacing** Width and length of the aida band

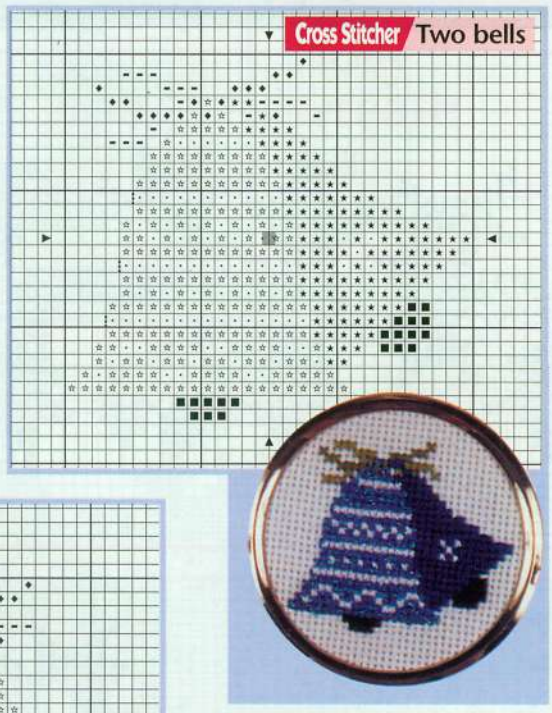


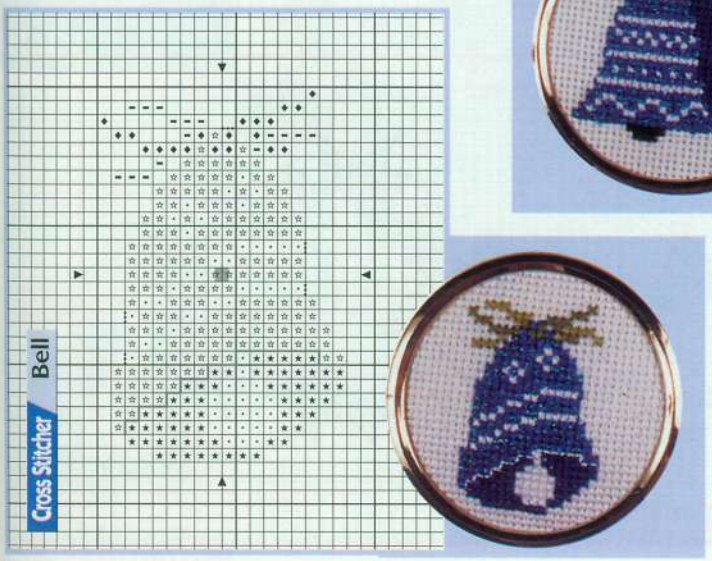


wrong side of your stitching and press in place.

2 Use the back disc from your frame as a template, place it centrally onto the back of your stitching and draw around it with a soft pencil.

3 Using a sharp pair of scissors, cut the circle out carefully and position it into the frame, then pop in the backing disk to hold your stitching in place.





Tree band & baubles

Anchor	DMC	Madeira	Colour
■ Cross stitch in three strands			
001	White	White	White
■ Cross stitch in two strands			
046	666	0210	Light red
047	321	0510	Dark red
164	824	1010	Dark blue
266	471	1408	Light green
268	469	1406	Medium green
403	310	Black	Black
■ Cross stitch blending two strands of each colour			
047 Kreinik blending filament 003HL	321	0510	Dk red Red hi-lustre
111 Kreinik blending filament 012	208	0804	Purple Purple
127 Kreinik blending filament 018HL	939	1008	Navy Navy hi-lustre
162 Kreinik blending filament 006	826	1012	Light blue Blue
269 Kreinik blending filament 008HL	936	1507	Dk green Green hi-lustre
■ Backstitch in three strands			
001	White	White	White – *candle on green bauble*
■ Backstitch in three strands			
001	White	White	White *bells*
■ Backstitch blending two strands of each colour			
047 Kreinik blending filament 003HL	321	0510	Dark red Red hi-lustre *red baubles*
111 Kreinik blending filament 012	208	0804	Purple Purple *purple bauble*
127 Kreinik blending filament 018HL	939	1008	Navy Navy hi-lustre *navy bauble*
162 Kreinik blending filament 006	826	1012	Light blue Blue *bells*
269 Kreinik blending filament 008HL	936	1507	Dark green Green hi-lustre *green baubles*

■ Design details

Our models were stitched using Anchor threads.

Tree tub band
Stitched on 16HPI, 2in wide aida band
• **Stitch count**
27 high x 223 wide
• **Design area**
approx 4x35cm (1⅝x14in).

Baubles
Stitched on 16HPI hardanger
• **Stitch count**
Max 27 high x 30 wide
• **Design area**
Approx 4x5cm (1⅝x1⅞in)

Christmas rose

Anchor	DMC	Madeira	Colour
■ **Cross stitch in two strands**			
001	White	White	White
046	666	0210	Med. red
047	321	0510	Dark red
254	3348	1604	Lime green
266	471	1408	Med green
268	469	1406	Dark green
269	936	1507	V dk green
280	733	1609	Light green
298	445	0103	Yellow
334	606	0209	Light red
397	762	1804	Grey
889	433	2008	Brown

Positioning for repeat

■ **Design Details** Our model was stitched using Anchor threads

Shelf border stitched on 16HPI, 2in wide aida band

• **Stitch count** each repeat is 28 high x 231 wide

• **Design area** 4x37cm (1¾x14½in)

Christmas rose

Skill

This design uses whole stitches only.

Time to stitch

Each repeat of the design will take about 15 hours to stitch

What to do

1 Decide on what length you want your shelf border to be and repeat the design how ever many times you need to, starting from the centre and working outwards. Remember to leave an even gap between each motif.

2 Back the band with iron-on interfacing and turn the cut edges under at each end.

3 Attach firmly to your shelf with double-sided tape.

You will need

■ **16HPI aida band** 5cm (2in) wide x required length, white with green edging (Fabric Flair, tel: 01985 214466)

■ **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key

■ **Tapestry needle** Size 26

■ **Iron-on interfacing** Width and length of the aida band

Festive bells and holly

Skill

You can get a really quick finish with these designs as they use whole stitches only.

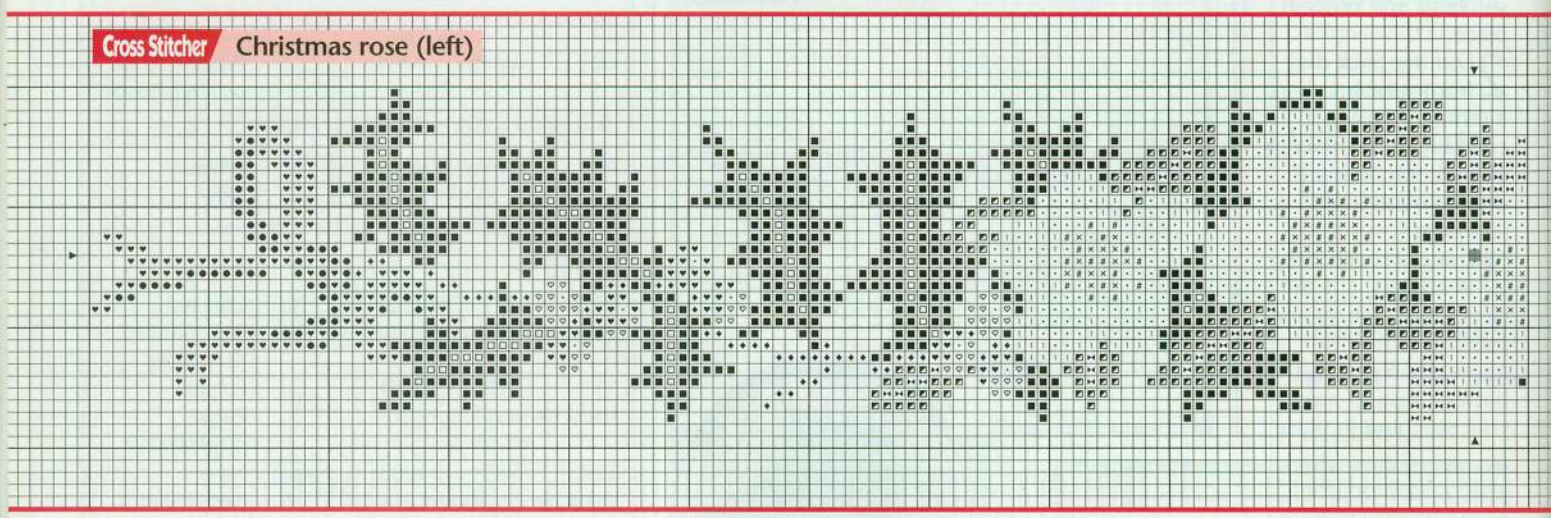
Time to stitch

Each of the decorations will only take you about five hours to finish.

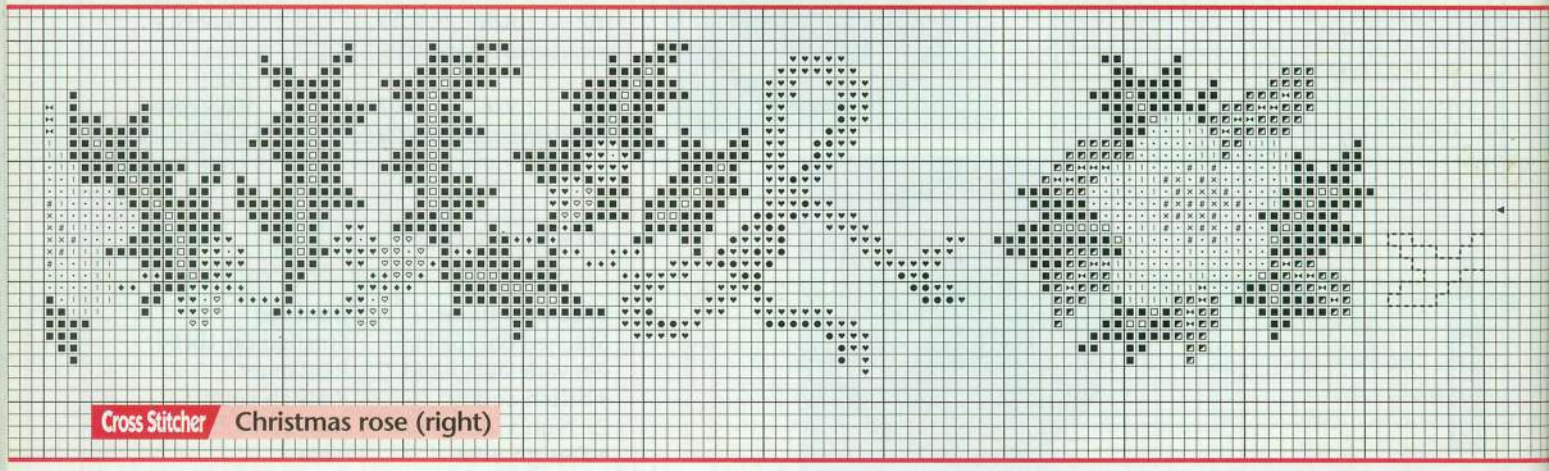
What to do

1 When you have finished stitching, place the iron-on interfacing onto the wrong side of your stitching and press in place.

2 Use the back disc from your frame as



Cross Stitcher Christmas rose (left)



Cross Stitcher Christmas rose (right)

a template, place it centrally onto the back of your stitching and draw around it with a soft pencil.

3 Using a sharp pair of scissors, cut the circle out carefully and position it into the frame, then pop in the backing disk to hold your stitching in place.

You will need

For each circular decoration:

- **16HPI aida** 18x18cm (7x7in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Tapestry needle** Size 26
- **Gold coloured plastic frames** 7.8cm (3in) in diameter (Framecraft, tel: 0121 212 0551)

Holly wreath

Skill

This design uses whole stitches only.

Time to stitch

It will take you about five hours to finish.

Festive bells and holly

Anchor	DMC	Madeira		Colour
Cross stitch in two strands				
046	666	0210	●●	Dark red
269	936	1507	◩◩	Dark green
280	733	1609	□□	Light green
297	973	0105	ıı	Light yellow
298	972	0107	××	Dark yellow
307	783	2212	★★	Gold
334	606	0209	♥♥	Light red
403	310	Black	■■	Black
Backstitch in one strand				
280	733	1609		Light green *holly*
403	310	Black		Black *bells*

Design Details Our models were stitched using Anchor threads

Festive bells stitched on 16HPI hardanger
- **Stitch count** 45 high x 38 wide
- **Design area** approx. 7x6cm (2¾x2⅜in)

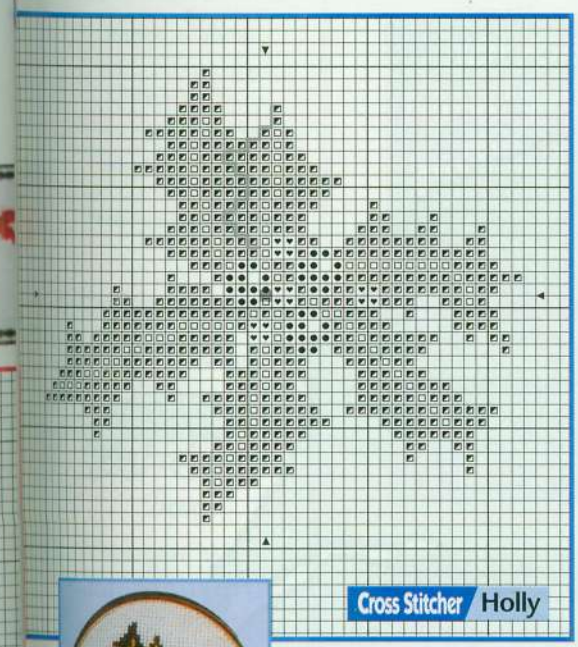
Holly stitched on 16HPI hardanger
- **Stitch count** 38 high x 43 wide
- **Design area** approx. 6x7cm (2⅜x2⅝in)

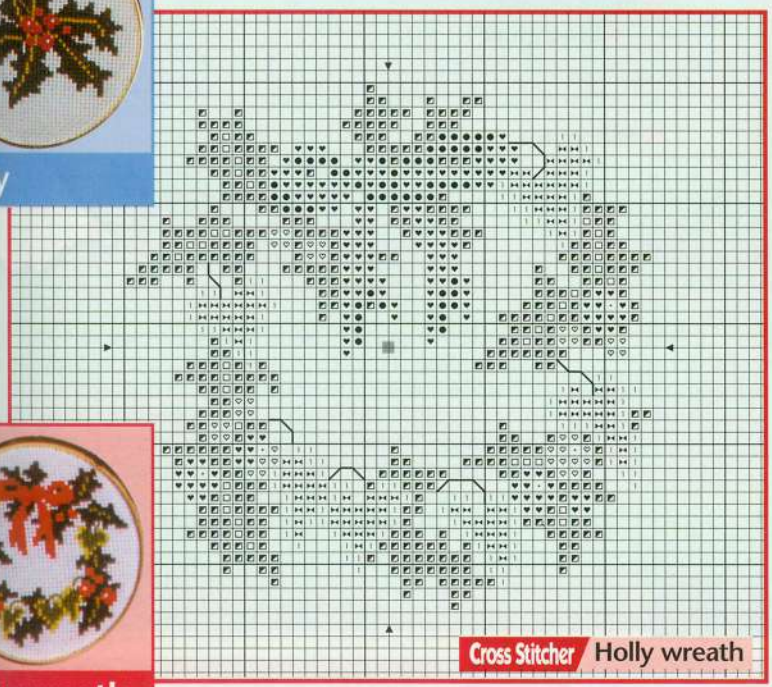
What to do

1 When finished stitching, place the iron-on interfacing onto the wrong side of the fabric and press.

2 Use the back disc from your frame as a template, place it centrally onto the back of your stitching and draw round it with a soft pencil.

3 Cut the circle out, position in the frame, then pop in the backing disc to hold the stitching in place.





Holly wreath

Anchor	DMC	Madeira		Colour
Cross stitch in two strands				
001	White	White	· ·	White
046	666	0210	♥♥	Med red
047	321	0510	●●	Dark red
268	469	1406	⋈⋈	Med green
269	936	1507	◩◩	Dark green
278	472	1610	ıı	Very lt green
280	733	1609	□□	Light green
334	606	0209	♡♡	Light red
Backstitch in one strand				
268	469	1406		Med green *ivy stems*

Design Details Our models were stitched using Anchor threads

- **Stitch count** 44 high x 44 wide;
- **Design area** 7x7cm (2¾x2¾in)

Christmas trimmings

Every year you decorate the tree and hang holly wreaths on your front door. But do you ever stop to wonder where Christmas traditions began? Sophie Wilks uncovers the beginnings of our festive customs

Do the scents and sounds of Christmas remind you to gather your brood together to sing carols, dig out your apron and drop lucky silver charms into the pudding mix? If they do, you have inherited the special traditions of days gone by.

The trimmings of Christmas had their beginnings long before we started buying crackers and cards from the shelves of the supermarket. It is common belief that Christmas decorations and traditions were started by the first Christians or maybe the Victorians, and it is true that both made them popular. But many traditions that we celebrate at Christmas began long before Christianity had come to Britain, and have their roots in the pagan and druid traditions of ancient Europe.

The holly and the ivy

Holly and ivy have long been renowned for their special healing properties – they were once used to ward off ailments such as asthma and eczema. Many still think that by leaving a sprig of holly on their front door, they can ward off thunder, lightening and fire. But a sprig of ivy holds the most promise for lonely hearts. Any time between 10th December and 6th January, a girl can hold a piece of ivy to her heart and say, "Ivy I love you, In my bosom I put you, the first young man who speaks to me, my future husband he shall be." The next man she meets will then fall head over heels in love with her and they will be married within the year. Got to be worth a try!

Festive plants can have hidden meanings

Many of the associations we make with Christmas have also been borrowed, not from other times, but from other countries. For example, Santa is only dressed in a red and white suit because, in an early Coca-Cola advertisement, an American marketing mogul thought Father Christmas would look good in their corporate colours!

All this means that today's Christmas trimmings are an intriguing mish-mash of ancient and foreign customs. And most of us wouldn't have our Christmas any other way!

Giving presents is one tradition that's sure to stay!

Kissing under the mistletoe

The druids considered the English oak to be a sacred tree; in fact, the word druid comes from the Greek for oak tree. So when the druids discovered mistletoe growing in the branches of an old oak, they concluded that it too must have spiritual properties. A priest would cut the

What a cracker!

A bright spark named Tom Smith invented the very first cracker in 1847. Whilst walking past a brightly coloured sweet shop he became fascinated with the unusually wrapped bon-bons in the window. One evening, whilst sitting by a roaring fire and listening to the crackling logs, he decided that by placing a loud bang inside a sweet wrapper, he could cause a sensation in the world of confectionery. This soon developed into the crackers we know today, filled with charms, jokes, and silly hats!

Today's crackers were inspired by unusual sweets

Photo: © Super Stock

Never forget the magic that Christmas brings

FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE FREE

A Special Christmas present for you

For more details of their sumptuous range of Christmas Hampers, pop into your local Tesco store, or call Tesco Direct on freecall: 0800 403403

This Christmas Basket from Tesco is filled to bursting with tempting treats such as sumptuous fruit cake, shortbread and chocolates. We've got one hamper worth £30 to give away to the first lucky winner pulled out of the hat. Send your name and address on a postcard to: Tesco Christmas Basket Giveaway, *Cross Stitcher* 63, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2LY by 24th November '97.

mistletoe down with a golden sickle and hang it above the doors of the village while the rest of the druids danced and sang to celebrate the winter solstice.

Oh Christmas tree

Evergreen trees have always represented eternal life. But they only became associated with British Christmas celebrations when Prince Albert brought a fir tree home from Germany to his beloved Queen Victoria. We became so enamoured with the fir tree that the Norwegian government thought it a fitting thank you for Britain's assistance in World War 2. So now, every year, they send us a tree to stand proudly in London's Trafalgar Square.

Festive greetings

The earliest known Christmas card was written by 19th Century schoolboys for their parents. They would write a Christmas tribute in calligraphy on specially decorated paper to take home for the Christmas holidays. But the invention of the festive greetings card can be credited to an English gentleman named Sir Henry Cole in 1843. He commissioned 1,000 copies of a hand painted design which sold at a shilling each. The design showed a family sipping wine and had the message: A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Spice it up with nutmeg and cinnamon

Gift wrapping

Giving presents was popular as far back as Roman times, when small gifts were offered to the Emperor during the reign of Caligula. The presents usually had a theme – for example honey was given to enhance 'sweetness' and money to bring wealth. But it was the church who eventually claimed that gifts should be given in the name of God referring to the story of the three kings who gave presents to the baby Jesus.

Sing-a-song of Christmas

The word carol means ring dance – they were often sung whilst dancing in a circle at the Medieval Christian festivals of Easter and Whitsun. It was not until the reign of Queen Victoria that the custom of travelling from house to house singing carols was made popular. Thankfully, for those of us who are tone deaf and can't sing for toffee, the first carols were made up of very few notes making them easy to follow!

Cracking ideas

Games to play

One of my childhood favourites, this game would have me in fits of giggles at every party.

Get everyone to sit in a circle and drop a single feather into the centre. With their hands behind their backs the players have to stop the feather landing on the floor by blowing it upwards. Whoever the feather lands closest to is out of the game.

Christmas Cheer

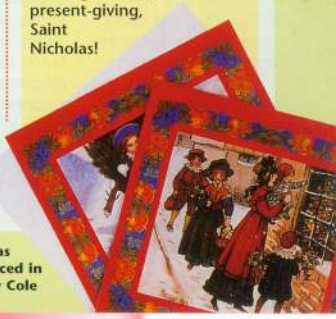
There's nothing more soothing on a cold winter evening than a cup of mulled wine. The smell is just as wonderful as the taste, but warming your frostbitten hands on the warm mug is the best bit of all.

- 10 fl oz (300ml) water
- 6 cloves
- 1/4 oz (8g) nutmeg
- 1/2 lemon
- 30 fl oz (900ml) port or claret
- Sugar

Gently heat the water, spices and thinly peeled lemon rind in a large pan. Bring almost to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes. Strain into a basin and add wine and sugar to taste. Return to the pan and heat but do not boil. Serve at once in earthenware mugs.

Stocking fillers

Traditionally, the toe of a Christmas stocking was filled with an apple for health and the heel with an orange for wealth. A bag of gold-wrapped chocolate coins was also popped in as a reminder of the generous, present-giving, Saint Nicholas!



The first Christmas cards were produced in 1843 by Sir Henry Cole

Christmas angels

Stitch these graceful Christmas angels to decorate your home. Designed by Sue Cook, they're the perfect gentle reminder of what Christmas is all about

There you are, three days before Christmas and panicking because you still have seven presents to buy, the children's party to organise, the pudding to make and the cake to ice. But then you spot your gorgeous Christmas tree, topped off with a beautiful angel, and suddenly you remember what Christmas is all about!

These angels are perfect for adding a classical, festive look to your home. Stitch the two matching pictures showing an angel with a trumpet and one with a lute, and bring them out each year in time for Christmas.

They are stitched on 28HPI evenweave over two threads. The angel for the top of the tree is stitched on 14HPI gold perforated paper, and can either be attached with a ribbon loop or tied from the back to the tip of your tree.

If you've not stitched on perforated paper before, don't worry. You'll find it is less rigid than plastic canvas but still fairly easy to stitch on. Simply hold it by hand as you stitch – you won't be able to use a hoop with it.

Each of the two angel pictures on evenweave will take you about 15 hours to stitch. Allow about 20 hours to stitch the tree decoration on perforated paper.

Mail Order Why trudge all the way to the shops? You can buy all the materials you need to stitch the two angel pictures through our mail order service on page 84

JOY

Angel with lute

Skill

If you're confident working with evenweave then this angel should be a doddle for you to stitch. The only fiddly bit is blending one strand of metallic thread with one strand of medium tan stranded cotton to give a festive glow to your stitching.

Time to stitch

You can finish this picture in three days if you work all evening.

You will need

- **28HPI jobelan** 27x24cm (10½x9½in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Frame** with a 14.5x13cm (5¾x5in) opening, silver with pink finish
- **Mount** with a 13.5x12cm (5½x4¾in) opening, pink
- **2oz wadding** 13.5x12cm (5½x4¾in)

What to do

1 Cut a piece of acid-free mount board to the same size as the inside of your frame.

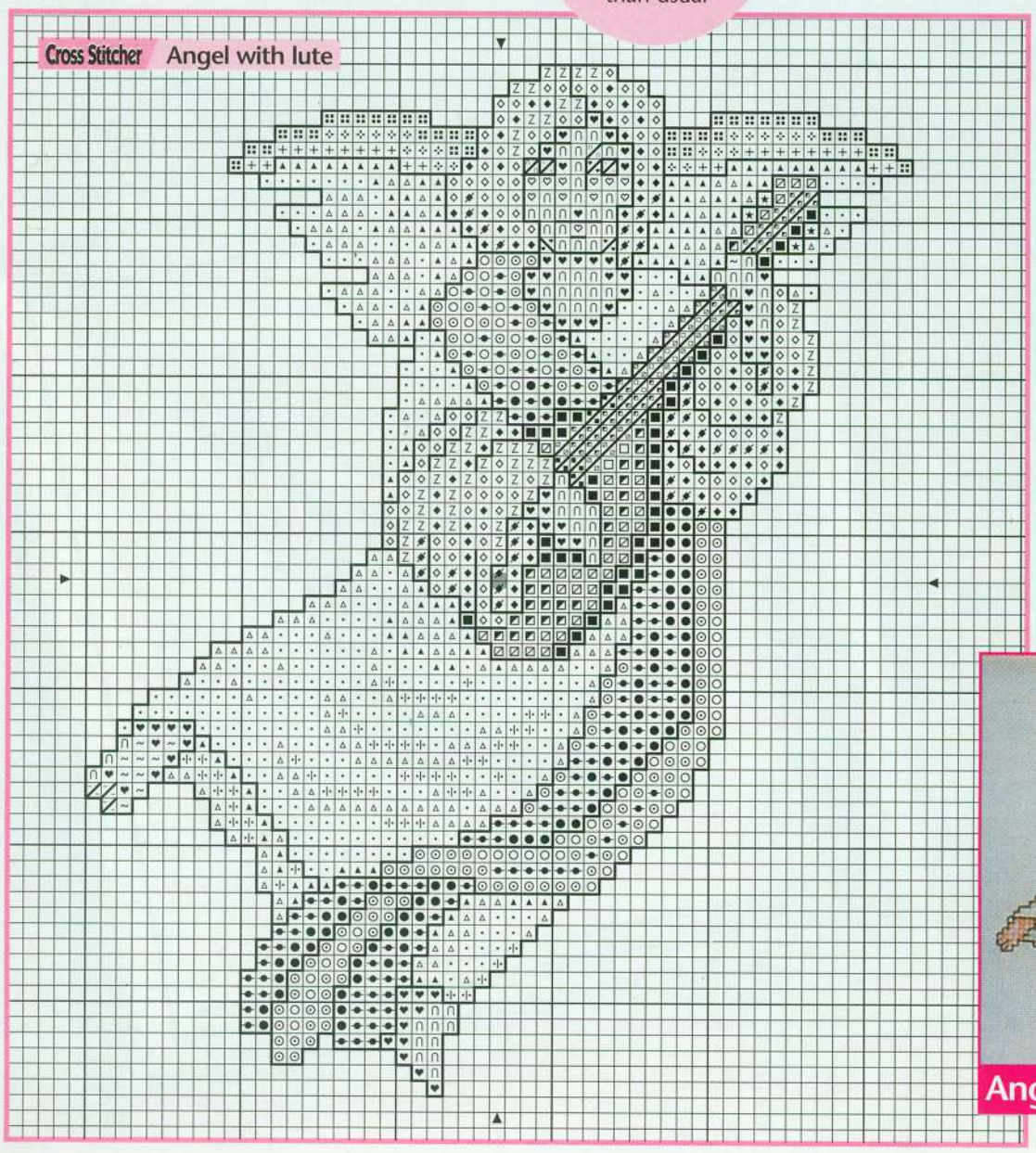
2 Use a piece of 2oz wadding to give a raised effect to your work. Cut a piece to the same size of the aperture in the mount and stick it on with double-sided sticky tape or glue.

3 Place your stitched piece the right way up on top of the wadding, making sure the design lies square and central.

4 Hold the stitched piece in place temporarily with small pieces of masking tape. Then lace the back of the fabric over the card using strong cotton.

5 Place the pink mount then the covered card inside the frame and add the backing board to hold it in position. Your work is now ready to hang on the wall. For a more detailed explanation on how to finish your projects turn to page 88.

TIP
Metallic threads tangle very easily, so stitch with shorter lengths of thread than usual



Angel with trumpet

Angel with trumpet

Skill

These angels are stitched using whole cross stitch and backstitch only. So even if you've never worked with metallic threads before, you should get great results from these two stunning designs.

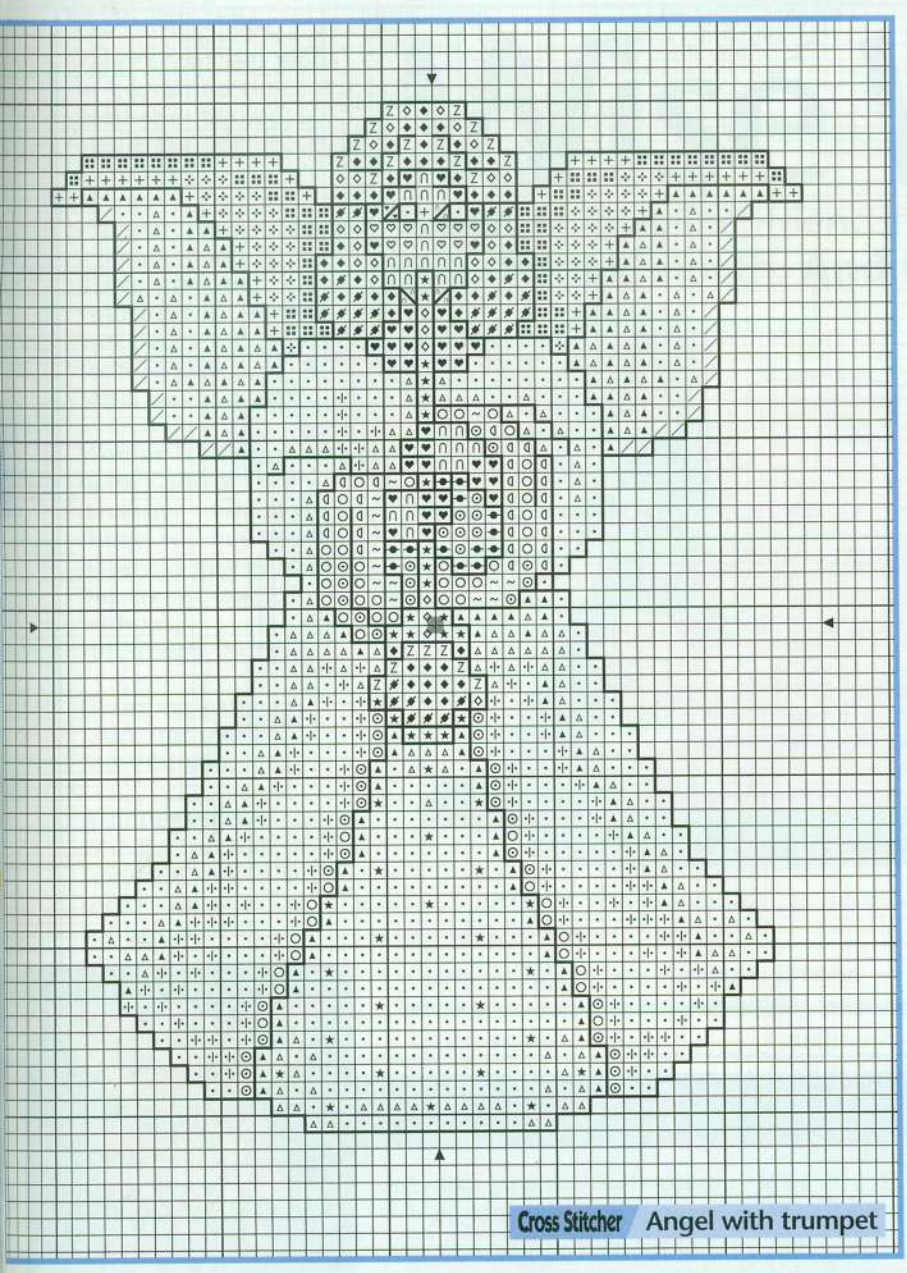
Time to stitch

It'll take just 15 hours of your time to make this Christmas decoration that's bound to be bought out year after year.

What to do

1 Cut a piece of acid-free mount board to the same size as the

Angel with lute



TIP

Stitch the trumpeting angel design on perforated paper or plastic to make pretty tree decorations

You will need

- **28HPI jobelan** 26x23cm (10¼x9in), white
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 26
- **Frame** with a 13.5x11.5cm (5¼x4½in) opening, silver with pink finish
- **Mount** with a 12.5x10.5cm (5x4¼in) opening, pink
- **2oz wadding** 12.5x10.5cm (5x4¼in)

inside of your frame.

2 Cut a piece of 2oz wadding to the same size of the aperture in your mount and stick it on with double-sided sticky tape or glue.

3 Place your stitched piece the right way up on top of the wadding, making sure the design lies square and central.

4 Hold the stitched piece in place temporarily with small pieces of masking tape. Then lace the fabric over the card using strong cotton.

5 Place the pink mount then the covered card inside the frame and add the backing board to hold it in position. Your work is now ready to hang on the wall. For a more detailed explanation on how to finish your projects turn to page 88.

Angel pictures

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
Cross stitch in two strands on the two pictures and cross stitch in three strands on the tree decoration			
White	001	White	White
221	897	0811	Dark burgundy
353	1012	0501	Med peach
648	398	1902	Dark grey
676	891	2208	Light tan
677	300	2207	V. light tan
680	901	2210	Dark tan
729	890	2209	Medium tan
754	1011	0305	Light peach
758	868	0403	Dark peach
760	1023	0405	Dark pink
761	1021	0404	Med pink
775	128	1001	Blue
838	381	2003	Brown
840	379	1912	Dark stone
841	378	1911	Med stone
842	376	1910	Light stone
950	4146	0305	Med flesh
3072	234	1901	Light grey
3328	1024	0409	V. dark pink
3713	023	0608	Light pink
3721	896	0811	Light burgundy
3773	868	2312	Dark flesh
3774	778	2308	Light flesh
3823	275	0101	Cream

Cross stitch blending one strand of each colour

729	890	2209	Medium tan
Kreinik blending filament			Gold

Backstitch in two strands

838	381	2003	Brown *lettering*

Backstitch in one strand

838	381	2003	Brown *all other outlines and details*

Design Details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads

Angel pictures Stitched on 28HPI, white jobelan over two threads

- **Stitch count** 66 high x 53 wide
- **Design area** approx 12x10cm (4¾x3¾in)

Angel with banner

Skill

Stitching on perforated paper is easy, but if you have never worked with it before, have a practise on a small piece to get used to the feel of holding it. Do not use an embroidery hoop, just hold it in your hand. Don't worry if this means that there's a few crinkles in your finished piece – you can press it flat with a warm iron.

Time to stitch

If you work for three hours every evening you'll have this angel finished in less than a working week.

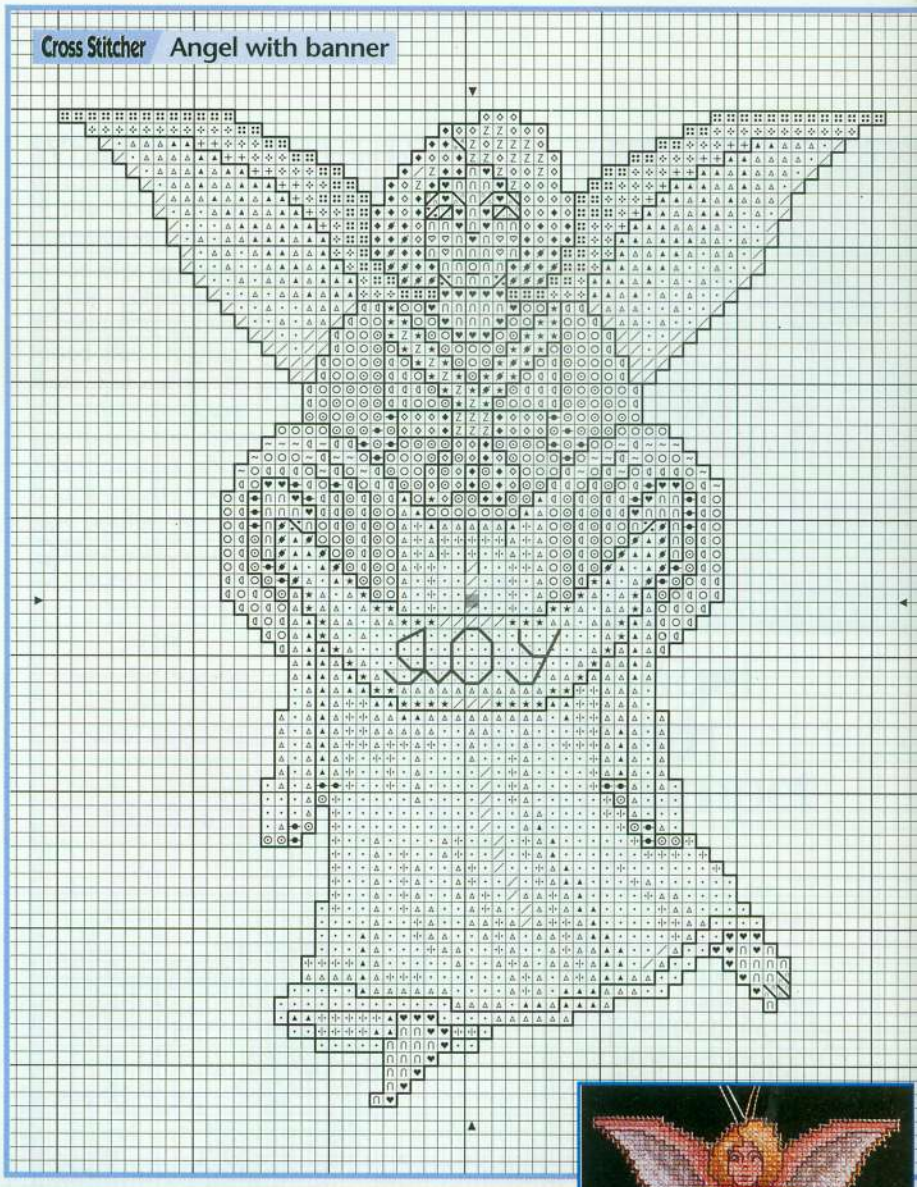
You will need

- **14HPI perforated paper** approx 30x22cm (12x9in), gold (available from the Inglestone Collection, tel: 01285 712778)
- **Stranded cotton** as listed in the key
- **Metallic thread** Kreinik blending filament, gold
- **Tapestry needle** size 24
- **Narrow ribbon** approx 15cm (6in) length x 4mm (⅛in) wide, white with gold trim

What to do

1 After you have finished stitching the design, trim all the way around the outside edge, one square away from the stitching, using a sharp pair of scissors.

2 Attach a loop of narrow, gold coloured ribbon to the centre-back of the angel's head, so that you can hang the angel as a decoration. Or stitch two lengths of ribbon to the back of the angel's body so you can tie it to the top of the tree.



Angel tree decoration

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
■ Cross stitch in two strands on the pictures and cross stitch in three strands on the tree decoration			
White	001	White	White
221	897	0811	Dark burgundy
353	1012	0501	Med peach
648	398	1902	Dark grey
676	891	2208	Light tan
677	300	2207	V. light tan
680	901	2210	Dark tan
729	890	2209	Medium tan
754	1011	0305	Light peach
758	868	0403	Dark peach
760	1023	0405	Dark pink
761	1021	0404	Med pink
775	128	1001	Blue
838	381	2003	Brown
840	379	1912	Dark stone
841	378	1911	Med stone
842	376	1910	Light stone
950	4146	0305	Med flesh
3072	234	1901	Light grey
3328	1024	0409	Very dark pink
3713	023	0608	Light pink
3721	896	0811	Light burgundy
3773	868	2312	Dark flesh
3774	778	2308	Light flesh
3823	275	0101	Cream
■ Cross stitch blending one strand of each colour			
729	890	2209	Medium tan
Kreinik blending filament			Gold
■ Backstitch in two strands			
838	381	2003	Brown *lettering*
■ Backstitch in one strand			
838	381	2003	Brown *all other outlines and details*

Angel decoration

■ Design Details

Our models were stitched using DMC threads

Angel tree decoration

Stitched on 14HPI perforated paper

- **Stitch count** 73 high x 61 wide
- **Design area** 13x11cm (5¼x4⅜in)

Wise Words

Words of love, life, friendship and future are shared by stitchers this month. **And the winner receives £10**

There's a special place in heaven for the mother of two boys.
Mrs Jennie English, Stevenage

I'm sorry you've been 6 – 0 long, don't be disconsol-8, but bear your ills with 42-de, and they won't seem so gr-8
Mrs S Bates, Aycliffe

Woman is at once a luxury and a necessity – one of the things we may not be happy in possessing, but are miserable without.
H J Arnopp, Norwich

Grant me patience Lord, but hurry.
Mrs J Brittain, Jersey

A smile is infectious you catch it like the flu, someone smiled at me today and now I'm smiling too!
Miss A Richardson, Slough

If I'd known that grandchildren were so much fun, I'd have had them first.
Mrs A Gibbs, Barnsley

It's nice to be important but it's more important to be nice.
Mrs Beggaley, Lutterworth

Give with cheerfulness and gladden your heart. Accept with pleasure and gladden anothers.
Mrs Joan Verge, Sevenoaks

A hug delights and warms and charms, that is why God gave us arms.
Viva Ann Elder, Applerley

I no doubt deserved my enemies, but I don't believe I deserved my friends.
Miss C E Hill, Beverley

"Saying of the Month"

If you want the best seat in the house, you'll have to move the cat!
Gisela Fullinfaw, Scarborough, Ontario

Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry and you cry alone.
Mrs D. Higgott, Chinnor

Count that day lost whose low descending sun views from thy hand no worthy action done.
Janet Smith, Earling

Laughter is the shortest distance between two people.
Mrs B Mansfield, Atherstone

We all touch someone's hand on our way through the dance.
Brenda Maddock, Crewe

The kiss of the sun for pardon, the song of the bird for mirth. One is closer to God in a garden, than anywhere else on Earth.
Mrs Dorothy Green, Aylesbury

God put me on Earth to accomplish a certain number of things. Right now, I am so far behind I will never die.
Miss Etta Boyd, Bangor

It ain't what we have, but what we give. It ain't what we are, but how we do it, that makes this life worth going through.
Mrs A Holmes, Southend-on-Sea

Memory is like a child walking along a beach, you never know what small pebble it will pick up and store amongst its treasured things.
Nicola Patmore, Taunton

Trust is like the soul, once it goes it cannot return.
Nara Steeples, Sheffield

Over to you...

Write and tell us your favourite sampler saying, quoting if possible the source it came from. Each month we pay £10 for the one we illustrate.

My favourite saying is _____

_____

_____

_____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Send this form (or a photocopy of it) to:

Favourite Sayings, Cross Stitcher, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

ALL UNDER TEN POUNDS

Budget gifts

Wondering what to buy your fellow stitchers this Christmas? Try these bright ideas for budget prezzies, or splash out and treat yourself instead!

Hoop-la!

£3-4 If your friend needs a hand keeping her stitching tension even, one of these hoops could be just the thing to stuff in her Christmas stocking. Available in bright colours from most stitch shops, these spring loaded hoops are perfect for stitching small projects.

Time for bed!

£3.95 A small kit makes the perfect little gift for a fellow stitcher. Choose a design of a character you know they'll love like this sleepy Paddington bear! Available locally or through Coats Crafts, ref. PBC104, tel: 01325 394394.

Felt squares

About £2 for 18 squares (measuring 4½in) These felt squares are perfect for anyone who loves making up little cross stitch projects. They're great for backing flexi-hoops or plastic canvas figures. Look out for felt squares sold in bundles in a wide range of colours.

Card treats

49p each or £4.66 for 10 If you know someone who's a fanatical stitcher of greetings cards, why not treat them to these very pretty card mounts from Craft Creations? Buy them a selection that covers all the seasons and you'll keep them happy throughout the year! Ref. AP50P, tel: 01992 781900.

Bobbin' around

£1.50 Lots of stitchers like to keep their threads neat on card bobbins, although this can be quite time-consuming. Give them a helping hand by wrapping this handy bobbin winder for under their tree. It fits most small plastic organiser boxes. From DMC, ref. N301; tel: 0116 2811040 for stockists' details.

Add some sparkle

£1.10 per skein Why not introduce your friends to the wonders of cross stitching with metallic threads? Buy a selection from your local stitching shop and wrap them up in tissue paper as a perfect little present. For Madeira threads contact Barnyarns, tel: 01845 524344; for Anchor tel: 01325 394394; for DMC, tel: 0116 2811040.

Snip at the price

£3.75 These DMC thread snips are just the job for any stitcher who suffers from fraying threads. The serrated edge on the top blade ensures a clean cut. Call DMC stockists 0116 2811040.

Minnie Mouse

£5.60 Everybody loves Disney characters and they are simply irresistible as cross stitch kits! Why not pick one for a special friend or to get a novice stitcher hooked in no time? Contact Designer Stitches, tel: 0161 4910006.

See the light

From £2.95 If you're really stuck for a gift idea then you can't go wrong with a Daylight bulb. They fit normal light fittings and will make any stitcher's life easier by clearly showing up the difference between thread shades. Daylight Studios 0181 9641200.

Chartfinder

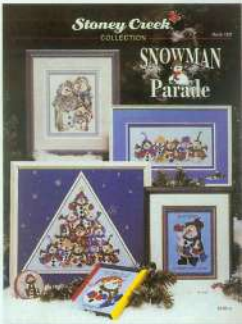
Stitch something special for Christmas – take your pick from our reviews of the best festive charts available in the shops now

Come let us adore him

Gloria & Pat/Code P978
£8.00 approx
Stitch count: 183 high x 177 wide
Supplier: DMC

Taken from a painting in the Precious Moments chapel in Missouri, USA, this delightful design brings alive the true meaning of Christmas. The chart is clearly printed using black and white symbols and the key lists DMC thread numbers.

Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	1
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗



Snowman Parade

Stoney Creek/Code SC159
£5.70 approx
Supplier: Designs Direct

This collection of 14 friendly snowmen designs is a cheery seasonal treat. Most are shown as colourful framed pictures in a range of sizes.

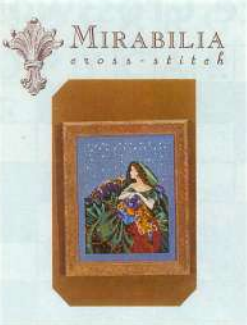
Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	14
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗

Merry Christmas

Leisure Arts/Code LP2672
£5.50 approx
Supplier: Coats Crafts

This booklet features designs such as a jolly Santa, reindeer, snowmen and a mischievous elf. There are a fabulous 14 projects, in various sizes.

Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	14
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗



Christmas Elegance

Mirabilia/Code MIRR06
£7.70 approx
Supplier: Wimble Bees

A richly colourful design, this single sheet chart uses black and white symbols. The finished item is designed for a framed picture of 13x11in.

Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	1
Stitching advice	Poor
Value for money	Fair
Rating	✗✗✗

Frosty the Snowman

Leisure Arts/Code LP2545
£5.50 approx
Supplier: Coats Crafts

This features 21 cheeky Frosty the Snowman designs in a range of project sizes. Each chart uses both colour and black and white symbols.

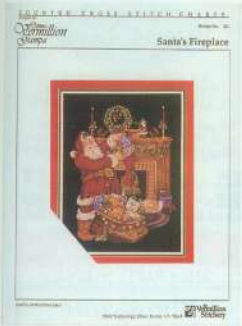
Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	21
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗

Spirit of Christmas

Dimensions/Code DB214
£4.99 approx
Supplier: Coats Crafts

The projects range from a gorgeous stocking design and a Christmas picture to small decorations. Colour and black and white symbols are used.

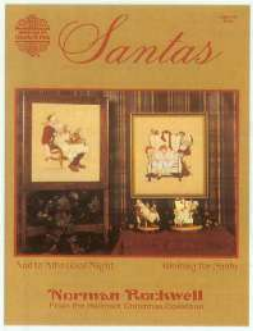
Clarity of chart	Fair
No. of designs	1
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗



Santa's Fireplace

Vermillion/Code 4615
£5.75 approx
Supplier: Country Designs
This single chart shows a cheery Santa filling a stocking hanging from a fireplace. It uses some metallic threads and a few beads.

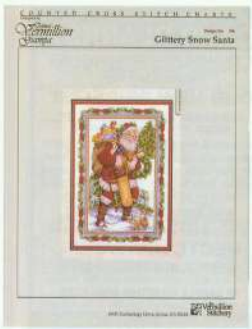
Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	1
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗



Santas

Gloria & Pat/Code P960
£8.00 approx
Supplier: DMC
This chart book includes two large picture designs of Santa – 'And to all a good night' and 'Waiting for Santa'. Black and white symbols are used.

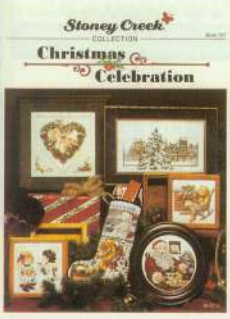
Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	2
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗



Glittery Snow Santa

Vermillion/Code 4614
£5.75 approx
Supplier: Country Designs
This design is a picture of Santa walking through the snow. The design is 'glittery' as it uses some sparkly Kreinik blending filaments.

Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	1
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗



Christmas Celebrations

Stoney Creek/Code 3651
£5.25 approx
Supplier: Country Designs
This collection of traditional Christmas images provides a range of projects for you to stitch, including cute animals, Santa and sweet little angels.

Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	9
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Good
Rating	✗✗✗✗✗

Nutcrackers

Gloria & Pat/P992
£13.50 approx
Supplier: DMC
This chart pack comprises a large tablecloth design of toy soldiers and Christmas trees. This includes charts and ideas for many small projects too.

Clarity of chart	Fair
No. of designs	15
Stitching advice	Good
Value for money	Fair
Rating	✗✗✗✗

Oh, Christmas Tree

Lavender & Lace/Code LL24
£7.50 approx
Supplier: Wimble Bees
This chart is for a picture of two children dressing the Christmas tree in a beautiful traditional setting. Black and white symbols are used.

Clarity of chart	Good
No. of designs	1
Stitching advice	Poor
Value for money	Fair
Rating	✗✗✗

What our ratings mean

The mark we give out of five is an overall assessment of the following: the number and quality of the designs; the clarity of the chart, the thread key, and the ease with which you can work from them; and the quality of the stitching advice and information provided.

Must Buy	✗✗✗✗✗
Excellent	✗✗✗✗
Very good	✗✗✗
Good	✗✗
Poor	✗

Chart suppliers

You should be able to obtain most of the charts featured in these pages from your local needlecraft stockist. If you have any difficulty tracking down the one you want or if it is only available by mail order, please contact the suppliers listed below.

- **Coats Crafts UK**
  Consumer Liaison, McMullen Road, Darlington, DL1 1YQ
  ☎ 01325 365457

- **DMC Creative World**
  Pullman Road, Wigston Leicester, LE18 2DY
  ☎ 0116 281 1040

- **Kinetic Needlecraft**
  10 The Pines, Broad Street, Guildford, Surrey, GU24 0DH ☎ 01483 562172

- **Wimble Bees**
  The Milking Parlour, Manor Farm, Hinkley Rd, Burton Hastings, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV11 6RG
  ☎ 01455 221000

Mail order only

- **Country Designs,**
  PO Box 66, Penryn, Cornwall, TR10 8YA
  ☎ 01326 375907

- **Designs Direct,**
  72 New Bond Street, London, W1Y 9DD

Stitching Store

Order these great stitching goodies by post, direct from us here at *Cross Stitcher*. It's the most convenient way to shop and will save you £££s

OWL KITS

Full instructions and charts for stitching these nocturnal birds start on page 48 of this issue of *Cross Stitcher*. Each kit contains DMC stranded cotton, 28HPI jobelan, thread organiser and needle.

Barn owl	Price: £5.50	Stitch Club Price: £4.50	Code: NCS/63/1
Little owl	Price: £5.00	Stitch Club Price: £4.00	Code: NCS/63/2
Long-eared owl	Price: £5.00	Stitch Club Price: £4.00	Code: NCS/63/3
Tawny owl	Price: £5.50	Stitch Club Price: £4.50	Code: NCS/63/4
Special offer of all four kits together	Price: £15.00	Stitch Club Price: £14.00	Code: NCS/63/6

Charts not included

2 GIFT TAGS WITH 2 KITS

This kit contains everything you need to make the gift tags featured as this month's free cover kit – two tags, 16HPI aida, DMC threads and a needle. Full instructions start on page 4.

Price: £4.50
Stitch Club price: £3.50
Code: NCS/63/KIT

Charts not included

SANTA AND SNOWMEN

As featured in *Cross Stitcher* Issue 62. Complete with 28HPI jobelan, DMC stranded cotton, thread organiser and needle, this kit contains everything you need to finish this delightful project in time for Christmas.

Price: £10.50
Stitch Club price: £9.50
Code: NCS/62/3

HOLLY TREE FARM

As featured in Issue 62 of *Cross Stitcher*. This holly tree farm sampler contains everything you need to finish the design: 31HPI linen, DMC stranded cotton, thread organiser and needle. It's an exclusive kit designed by Helen Philipps specially for *Cross Stitcher*.

Price: £10.50
Stitch club price: £9.50
Code: NCS/62/2

Chart not included.

THE Stitch Club

Join The Stitch Club today and save £££'s on each offer – look out for the prices marked in red next to each one to see just how much. All you have to do is subscribe and you automatically become a member – FREE. See page 11 or tel: 01225 822511 to join.

CHRISTMAS ANGELS

Full instructions and charts for stitching these glittering angels can be found on page 68 of this issue of *Cross Stitcher*. The kit contains DMC cotton, 28HPI jobelan, thread organiser and tapestry needle.

Price: £5.60
Stitch Club Price: £4.60
Code: NCS/63/5

Charts not included

DISNEY CHRISTMAS CARDS

Send your Christmas wishes in style with your favourite Disney stars. These Donald, Goofy, Mickey and Minnie card kits come in a pack of four, one of each design. Each kit contains 18HPI white aida, DMC threads, needle, thread organiser card mount, envelope and GlissenGloss tinsel.

Price: £14.50
Stitch club price £13.50
Code: NCS/62/DIS

BACK ISSUES Only the issues below are still available

BACK ISSUES: £3.95
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Order Code:
Just quote NCSB followed by the issue number.

Issue 53 – February
FREE pin cushion kit, Country Companions hedgehog sampler, cute farmyard animals.

Issue 54 – March
FREE mother's day card, animal afghan, wildflower sampler, weaving magic and classic Clarice Cliff china designs.

Issue 55 – April
FREE floral card kit, farmyard scenes, Rain or Shine double design, key keepers, springtime sampler and wedding design.

Issue 56 – May
FREE needlecase kit, teddy party design, miniature samplers, country kitchen designs, third part of the afghan series.

Issue 57 – June
FREE bookmark cover kit, strawberry clock, pretty playroom designs, mosaics, kitchen designs, Father's day gifts.

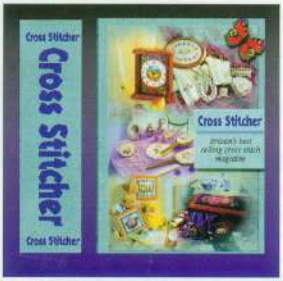
Issue 58 – July
FREE little girl cover kit oranges and lemons topiary trees, teatime sampler, floral breakfast set, summer sampler, teddies.

Issue 59 – August
Piggy cover kit, fresh strawberries, blue and white crockery, doll's house sampler, holiday designs, boy's sampler.

Issue 60 – September
Cottage card cover kit, kitten trio, berries, birds, little girl's bedroom set, beautiful borders, seasonal bell pull, teddy bear.

Issue 61 – October
Free square coaster and kit, wild flowers, Shaker designs, Halloween sampler, river birds, autumn sampler, anniversaries.

Issue 62 – November
Free holly and ivy Christmas gift tags and kit, winter florals, birds of prey, Christmas gifts, Holly Tree Farm sampler.



CROSS STITCHER BINDER

The cover of this attractive binder features just some of the wonderful projects in past issues. You'll find plenty of space for 13 magazines, enough to keep an entire year's worth of *Cross Stitcher* as pristine as the day you bought it.

Price: £6.95
Stitch Club price: £6.45
Code: NCS/B2

PACK OF 10 GIFT TAGS

As featured as part of this month's cover kit, we have a pack of 10 card mounts for you to stitch your own Christmas tags. Perfect for the designs featured on page 6, you can stitch someone an extra special Christmas greeting. The pack contains 10 illustrated tags, kit not included.

Price: £2.50
Stitch Club Price: £2.00
Code: NCS/63/TAG

TO ORDER BY POST
Complete this form and send it to: Cross Stitcher offers, Future Publishing, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB. Make cheques payable to Future Publishing or we accept Mastercard and Visa cards. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

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The lines are manned from 8.45am to 6pm every weekday.

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Your money back if you are not entirely satisfied with any purchase.

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Send to: Cross Stitcher Offers, Future Publishing, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB.

Fun gift tags you can finish in a couple of hours

Next month...

Country Companions in cross stitch

A classic design you'll love to stitch!

Stitch a set of game birds – grouse, partridge, pheasant and quail

Plus

- HelpDesk – all your stitching questions answered
- Stitching Tales from stitchers like you!
- Hundreds of £££ worth of free gifts

Your FREE gift
Christmas card kit and penguin card to match!

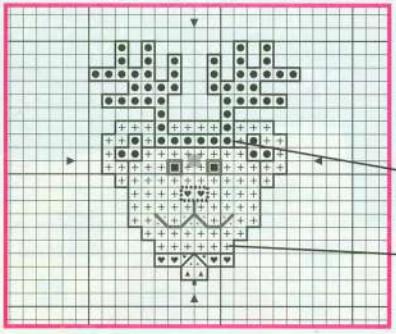
Country Companions ™ © Gordon Fraser Gallery

Cross Stitcher All in Issue 65 Christmas
On sale Tuesday 25th November

Here's how to do it...

Keep these pages handy when you are stitching any of the designs in *Cross Stitcher*. They'll tell you everything you need to know...

Understanding our charts and keys



It is best to start stitching from the centre of the design, in the centre of the fabric, keeping an even amount around the design for mounting. The centre of the chart is marked with a grey square; the outside edges are marked with four small arrows pointing to the centre.

Each symbol on the chart represents a single stitch and its position is counted on the fabric using the chart as a guide.

Parts of the design may be outlined in backstitch – identified by the lines that go around or through the symbols. Other stitches, such as French knots, are listed at the end of the key that tells you which symbols represent which thread colours on the chart.

Our models have been stitched in the threads that are listed in the first column. Other makes of thread are not always exact equivalents, so check the colours by eye before you start stitching. We also give the size of the design in stitches, centimetres and inches.

Rudolf key

DMC	Anchor	Madeira	Colour
■ Cross stitch in two strands			
White	001	White	White
310	403	Black	Black
321	047	0510	Red
801	357	2007	Dk brown
3820	306	2509	Yellow
3828 brown	373	2103	Light
■ Backstitch in one strand			
310	403	Black	Black *face details*
321	047	0510	Red *Rudolph's nose*
801	357	2007	Dk brown *all other outlines and details*
■ French knots in one strand			
801	357	2007	Dk brown *Rudolph's bell*

■ Design details

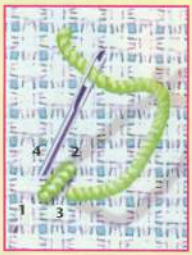
Our models were stitched using DMC threads on 16HPI aida

- **Stitch count** 19 high x 16 wide
- **Design area** 3x3cm (1⅛x1in)

All the Cr

■ How to start

1 Have a look at the stranded cotton – you'll see that there are six strands in each piece. Pull out two strands of cotton and thread them both into the eye of your tapestry needle.



2 The fabric pictured above is called aida. It's a fabric which has been woven in blocks with a hole in each corner of each block as you can see from the diagram.

3 Each cross stitch is worked over one block of the aida – if you're working on evenweave you need to stitch over two threads of the fabric.

4 Starting in the centre of the fabric, make your first cross stitch. Bring the needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3 and down at 4. Leave about an inch of thread hanging out the back of the fabric.

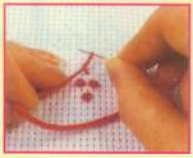
5 Work the rest of the cross stitches in the same way by counting the squares up, down or along on the symbol chart to find where to put the rest of your stitches.

6 To secure the thread at the back of your work, catch it down with your first few stitches.

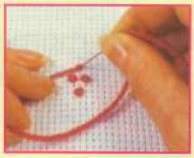
ss *Stitcher* stitching know-how you need

The easy way to stitch perfect French knots

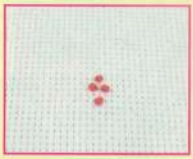
1 Bring the needle up where you want the knot to be. Hold the thread taut with your left hand as it comes out of the fabric and place the needle behind it.



2 Twist the needle around the thread once. If you want a bigger knot use two or three strands instead of twisting it more times around the needle.



3 Keeping the thread taut so the loops are tight round the needle, push the needle back into the fabric a fraction to the side of where it first emerged.



4 Hold the thread taut until the needle passes all the way through the fabric. Pull gently, but firmly, to form the knot. Repeat as necessary.

Stitching over two threads

Your design will come out the same size on 28HPI evenweave fabric as it would on 14HPI aida, if you stitch over two threads. Make each cross stitch over two threads of the fabric to cover a nine-hole square instead of the usual four-hole square.

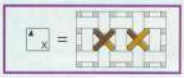
Neat and tidy backstitch

Working in the number of strands specified in the key, bring your needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3 and down at 1, ensuring your thread doesn't get twisted.

Fractional stitches

If a chart has a smaller version of a symbol in the corner of a square, you should make a three-quarter stitch in that position.

First, work a quarter stitch by bringing the needle up at that corner and pushing it down in the centre before stitching the diagonal half stitch across it. Where two symbols share a square on the



chart, one is a quarter stitch in one colour and the other a three-quarter stitch in another colour. Make the three-quarter stitch in the colour you want to be most prominent.

Designs with fractional stitches are easier to stitch on evenweave – you will have to split the threads of the fabric if stitching on aida.

Sizing projects

To work out how big a design will be when it's finished, simply divide the height and width (in squares) on the chart by the number of holes per inch (HPI) of your chosen fabric. For example, the Black-eyed susan design in the 1998 calendar you received with this issue, is 48 squares high and 47 squares wide.

On 18HPI aida:
48÷18 = 2¾in
47÷18 = 2½in

On 30HPI linen:
48÷30 = 1¾in
47÷30 = 1½in

If you are stitching over two threads of evenweave fabric, you need to divide the HPI by two, to give the number of stitches per inch, before calculating the design area.

Eg. on 30HPI linen over two threads:
48÷15 = 3⅜in
47÷15 = 3¾in

Where to find us...

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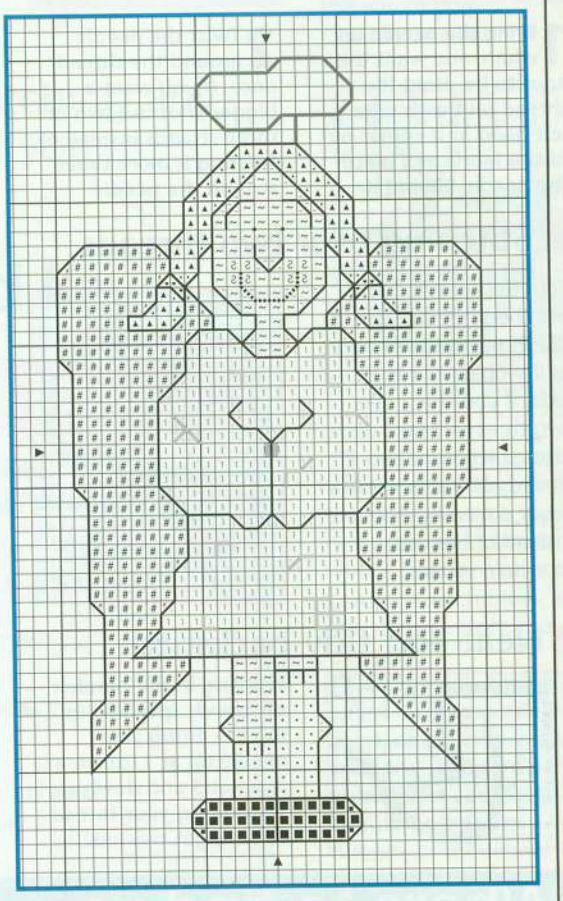
Tea Break

By mid-morning on Christmas day it's not only the angel on the top of the tree that's looking a bit dishevelled



Christmas – a time for gathering your brood together, singing carols and wishing peace and goodwill to all men. That's the Dickensian dream, but our great expectations are often shattered by the reality of spending three whole days with our families.

Distant relations who only meet at weddings, funerals and Christmas, bore each other with stories of weddings, funerals and last Christmas. The kids are sulking because Santa Claus didn't leave them a cuddly Teletubby toy, and your great aunt Dora's had one too many sherries.

By the time you've managed to sit everyone down for Christmas dinner you're beginning to wonder what it's all for. It's not long though, before they're all full up and happy, and immensely grateful to you for bringing them all together again.

So, when your nerves begin to fray, take a peak at this little angel and remember – it will all be worth it in the end. Happy Christmas!

Teabreak angel

Anchor	DMC	Madeira	Colour
■ Cross stitch in two strands			
001	White	White	White
006	754	0305	Light peach
008	353	0304	Dark peach
047	321	0510	Red
292	3078	0102	Lt yellow
358	433	2008	Me brown
380	938	2005	Dk brown
1210	113		Variegated blue
■ Back stitch in two strands			
047	321	0510	Red *smile*
291	444	0106	Dark yellow *halo*
■ Back stitch in one strand			
403	310	Black	Black *all other outlines and details*
1046	782	2211	Light brown *dress creases*
■ French knots in one strand			
403	310	Black	Black *eyes*

■ Design details

Our model was stitched using Anchor threads on 28HPI jobelan over two threads.

- **Stitch count** 55 high x 30 wide
- **Design area** 10x5cm (4x2⅛in)